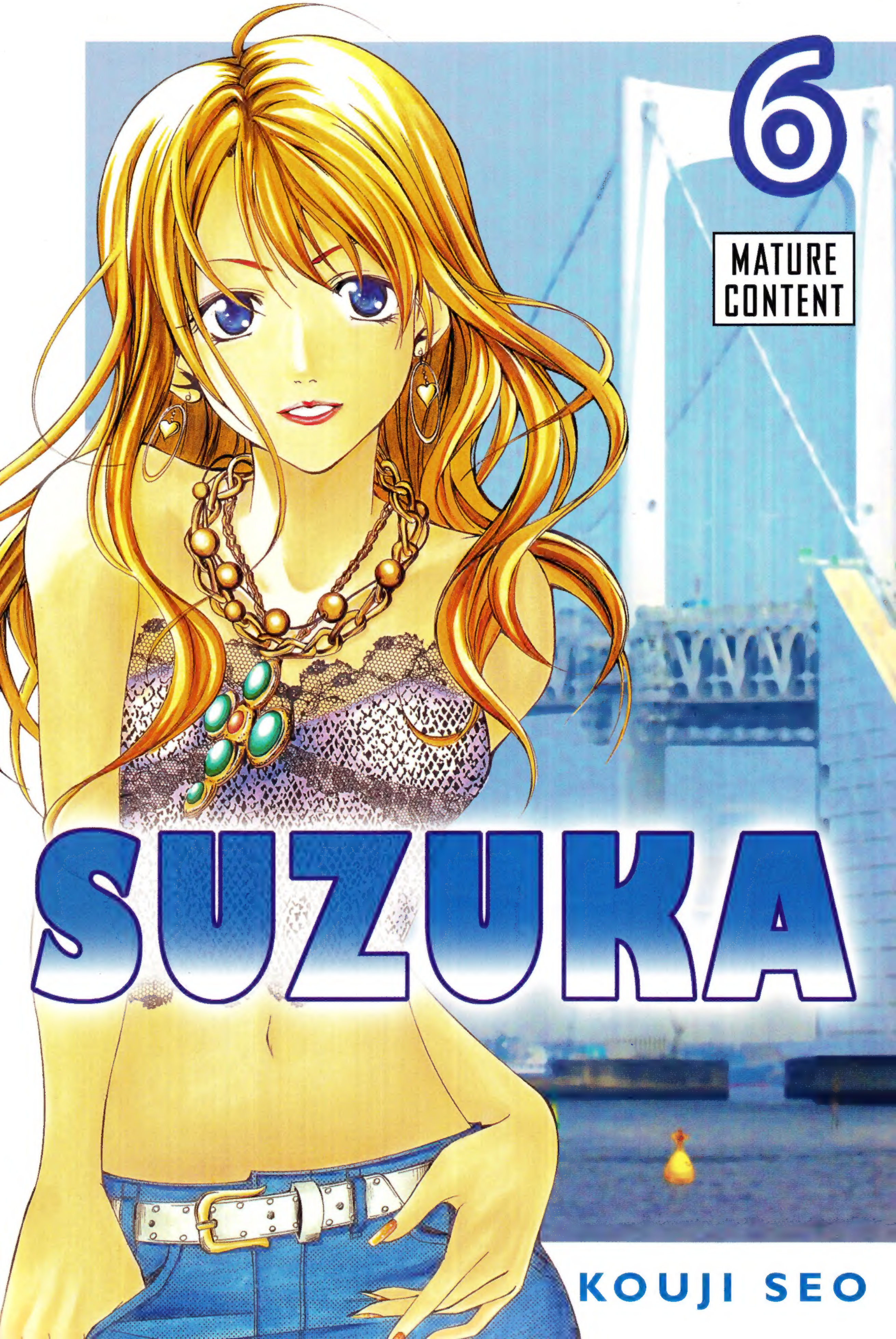

6

MATURE
CONTENT

SUZUKA

KOUJI SEO

SUZUKA

6

Kouji Seo

TRANSLATED AND ADAPTED BY
David Ury

LETTERED BY
North Market Street Graphics

DEL REY
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A Note from the Author

I STARTED GROWING TOMATOES ON MY VERANDA, HOPING THAT I'D HAVE A CROP READY BY SUMMER. THE DIRECTIONS SAY TO PRUNE THE PLANT ONCE IT GETS BIG, BUT I JUST COULDN'T BEAR TO HURT IT. SO I DECIDED TO BUY A BIG POT AND TRANSFER THE WHOLE THING INTO IT. THIS SUMMER, I SHOULD BE UP TO MY EARS IN TOMATOES.

Honorifics Explained

Throughout the Del Rey Manga books, you will find Japanese honorifics left intact in the translations. For those not familiar with how the Japanese use honorifics and, more important, how they differ from American honorifics, we present this brief overview.

Politeness has always been a critical facet of Japanese culture. Ever since the feudal era, when Japan was a highly stratified society, use of honorifics—which can be defined as polite speech that indicates relationship or status—has played an essential role in the Japanese language. When addressing someone in Japanese, an honorific usually takes the form of a suffix attached to one's name (example: "Asuna-san"), is used as a title at the end of one's name, or appears in place of the name itself (example: "Negi-sensei," or simply "Sensei!").

Honorifics can be expressions of respect or endearment. In the context of manga and anime, honorifics give insight into the nature of the relationship between characters. Many English translations leave out these important honorifics and therefore distort the feel of the original Japanese. Because Japanese honorifics contain nuances that English honorifics lack, it is our policy at Del Rey not to translate them. Here, instead, is a guide to some of the honorifics you may encounter in Del Rey Manga.

-san: This is the most common honorific and is equivalent to Mr., Miss, Ms., or Mrs. It is the all-purpose honorific and can be used in any situation where politeness is required.

-sama: This is one level higher than "-san." It is used to confer great respect.

-dono: This comes from the word "tono," which means "lord." It is an even higher level than "-sama" and confers utmost respect.

-kun: This suffix is used at the end of boys' names to express familiarity or endearment. It is also sometimes used by men among friends, or when addressing someone younger or of a lower station.

-chan: This is used to express endearment, mostly toward girls. It is also used for little boys, pets, and even among lovers. It gives a sense of childish cuteness.

Bozu: This is an informal way to refer to a boy, similar to the English terms "kid" and "squirt."

Sempai/ Senpai: This title suggests that the addressee is one's senior in a group or organization. It is most often used in a school setting, where underclassmen refer to their upperclassmen as "sempai." It can also be used in the workplace, such as when a newer employee addresses an employee who has seniority in the company.

Kohai: This is the opposite of "sempai" and is used toward underclassmen in school or newcomers in the workplace. It connotes that the addressee is of a lower station.

Sensei: Literally meaning "one who has come before," this title is used for teachers, doctors, or masters of any profession or art.

[blank]: This is usually forgotten in these lists, but it is perhaps the most significant difference between Japanese and English. The lack of honorific means that the speaker has permission to address the person in a very intimate way. Usually, only family, spouses, or very close friends have this kind of permission. Known as *yobisute,* it can be gratifying when someone who has earned the intimacy starts to call one by one's name without an honorific. But when that intimacy hasn't been earned, it can be very insulting.

SUZUKA

6

Kouji Seo

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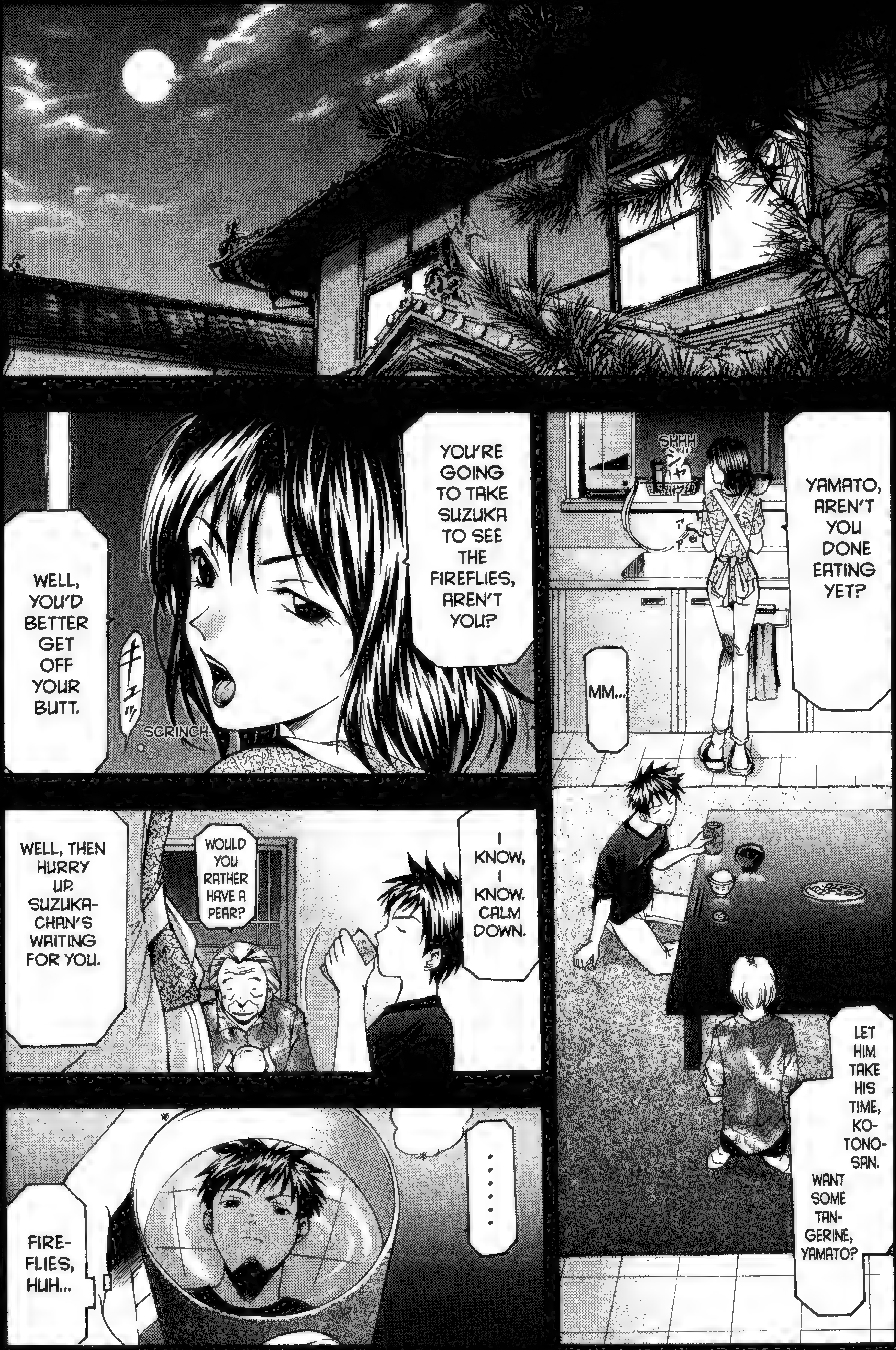
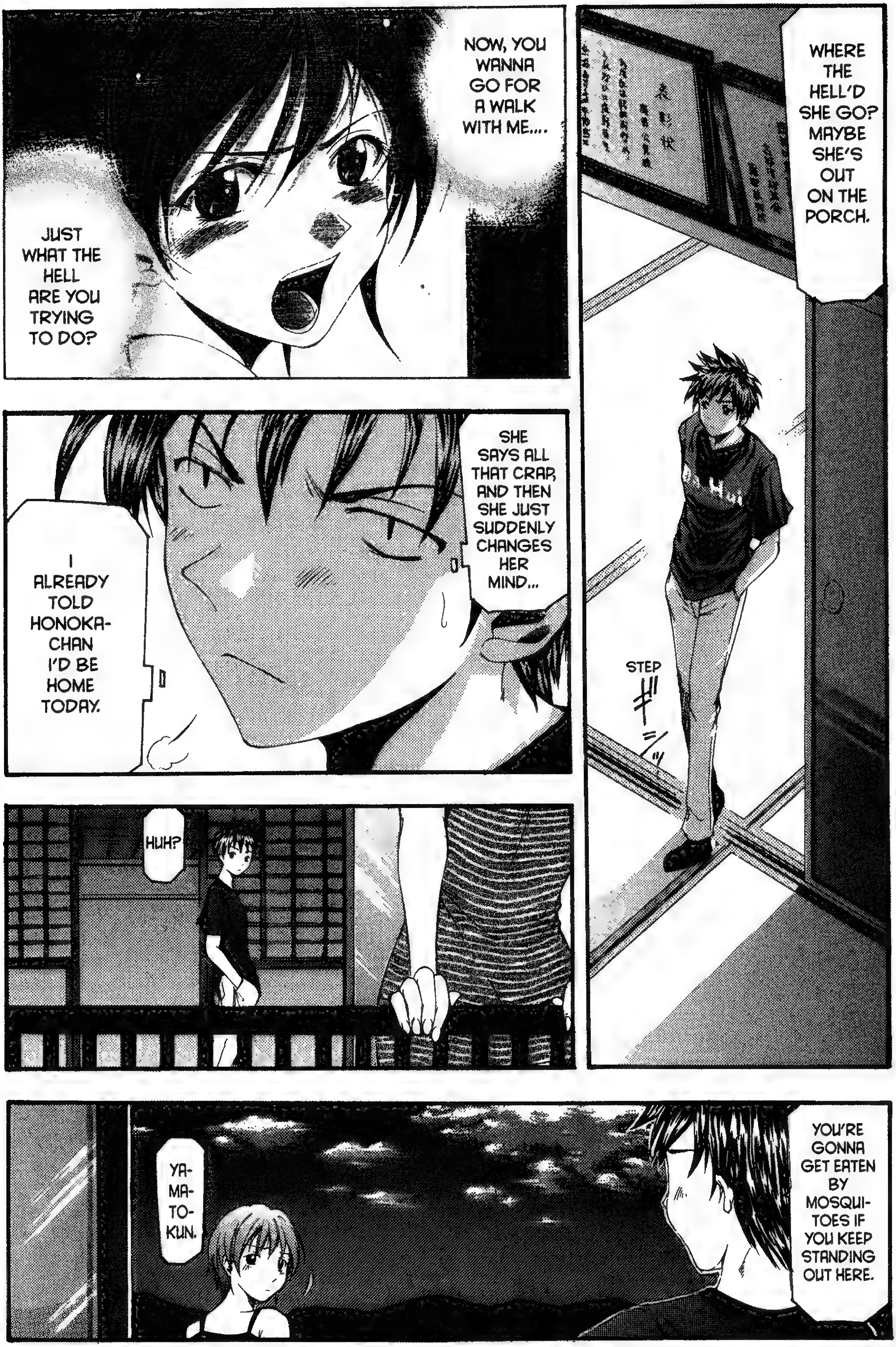
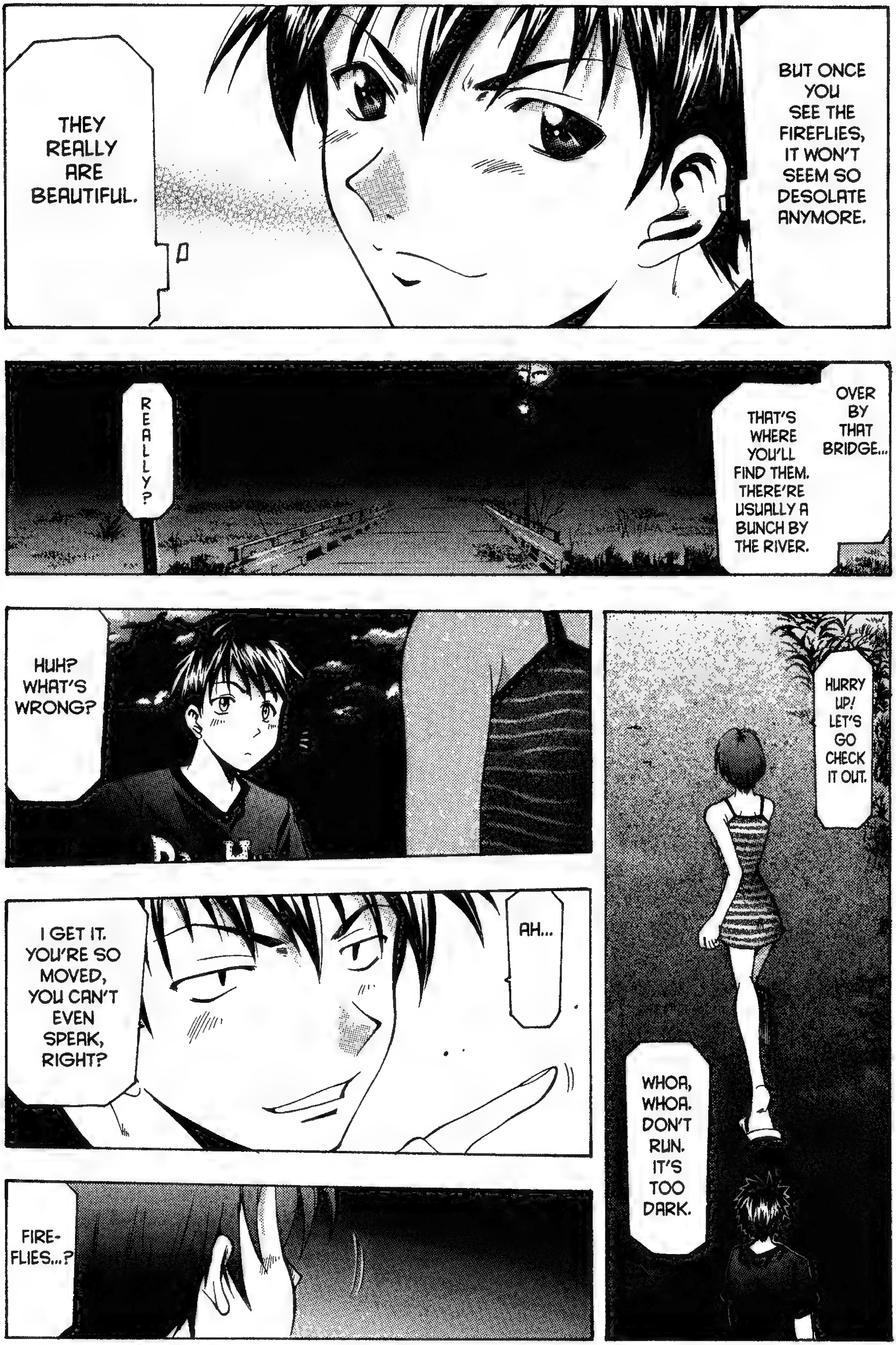

SHHH
YAMATO, AREN'T YOU DONE EATING YET?
MM...
YOU'RE GOING TO TAKE SUZUKA TO SEE THE FIREFLIES, AREN'T YOU?
チェッ
SCRINCH
WELL, YOU'D BETTER GET OFF YOUR BUTT.
LET HIM TAKE HIS TIME, KO-TONO-SAN.
WANT SOME TAN-GERINE, YAMATO?
I KNOW, I KNOW. CALM DOWN.
WOULD YOU RATHER HAVE A PEAR?
WELL, THEN HURRY UP. SUZUKA-CHAN'S WAITING FOR YOU.
......
FIRE-FLIES, HUH...

SUZUKA

#41 FIREFLIES


WHERE THE HELL'D SHE GO? MAYBE SHE'S OUT ON THE PORCH.
STEP
NOW, YOU WANNA GO FOR A WALK WITH ME....
JUST WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU TRYING TO DO?
SHE SAYS ALL THAT CRAP, AND THEN SHE JUST SUDDENLY CHANGES HER MIND...
I ALREADY TOLD HONOKA-CHAN I'D BE HOME TODAY.
HUH?
YOU'RE GONNA GET EATEN BY MOSQUITOES IF YOU KEEP STANDING OUT HERE.
YAMATO-KUN.

I ALREADY GOT BITTEN.
BECAUSE A CERTAIN SOMEBODY WAS TAKING WAY TOO LONG TO FINISH HIS DINNER.
OKAY, OKAY, I'M SORRY.
DON'T SIT DOWN! COME ON, LET'S GO.
OKAY, ALREADY.
WOW, THIS PLACE REALLY IS DESOLATE. NOTHING BUT RICE PADDIES EVERYWHERE YOU LOOK.
コッ STEP
YEAH, SORRY IT'S NOT SOPHISTICATED ENOUGH FOR YOU...


BUT ONCE YOU SEE THE FIREFLIES, IT WON'T SEEM SO DESOLATE ANYMORE.
THEY REALLY ARE BEAUTIFUL.
OVER BY THAT BRIDGE...
THAT'S WHERE YOU'LL FIND THEM. THERE'RE USUALLY A BUNCH BY THE RIVER.
REALLY?
HURRY UP! LET'S GO CHECK IT OUT.
WHOA, WHOA. DON'T RUN. IT'S TOO DARK.
HUH? WHAT'S WRONG?
AH...
I GET IT. YOU'RE SO MOVED, YOU CAN'T EVEN SPEAK, RIGHT?
FIRE-FLIES...?

I DON'T SEE A SINGLE ONE.
HUH?
HUH? WHAT THE HELL?
ガサ RUSTLE
ガサッ RUSTLE
THERE'S ALWAYS TONS OF THEM HERE... EVERY SINGLE SUMMER...
...BUZZ-ING UP A STORM...
HUH?
....
GLARE
IT'S TRUE.

SORRY...
I KNOW YOU STAYED AN EXTRA NIGHT JUST FOR THIS...
THAT'S ALL RIGHT. I HAD A FEELING THIS WOULD HAPPEN ANYWAY.
......
SHIT. THERE ARE ALWAYS TONS OF 'EM OUT HERE WHEN I COULD CARE LESS ABOUT THEM.
SCHWIK
THESE DAMN FIREFLIES ARE NEVER AROUND WHEN I NEED THEM.
HUH? DID YOU BRING SOMEONE ELSE OUT HERE TO SEE THEM BEFORE?
YEAH...
BACK IN JUNIOR HIGH, I INVITED THIS GIRL I LIKED OUT HERE...SO I COULD TELL HER I WAS IN LOVE WITH HER.
I THOUGHT IT WOULD BE THE PERFECT SETTING... YOU KNOW... SURROUNDED BY FIREFLIES...
SO...
WHAT HAP-PENED?

WELL...THAT NIGHT... THERE WASN'T A SINGLE DAMN FIREFLY OUT HERE. AND THEN IT STARTED POURING DOWN RAIN.
MY WHOLE PLAN WAS RUINED.
I FIGURED "WHAT THE HELL" AND I TOLD HER I LOVED HER ANYWAY. SHE JUST TURNED AROUND AND WALKED AWAY.
WITHOUT EVEN SAYING A WORD.
HEH. HA, HA, HA.
WH-WHAT'S SO FUNNY?
I CAN TOTALLY PICTURE THAT.
THAT'S SO YAMATO-KUN!

YOU'RE ALWAYS LIKE THAT.
YOU FINALLY GET TO YOUR BIG MOMENT, AND THEN YOU BLOW IT.
SHUT UP!
......
WH-WHAT IS?
IT WASN'T SUPPOSED TO BE FUNNY.
THIS ISN'T A JOKE TO ME, OKAY.
YOU KNOW...
I HAVE TOLD GIRLS I LOVED THEM WITHOUT BLOWING IT BEFORE!
HUH?
......
THAT'S WHAT'S SO FUNNY ABOUT IT.
YOU SET UP THIS MOOD, AND THEN YOU TO-TALLY RUIN IT.
Da Hui

OH, WHAT ARE YOU BRAGGING ABOUT NOW?
YOU'LL TELL JUST ANY GIRL YOU LOVE HER, WON'T YOU, YAMATO-KUN.
WHAT?
DaHui
WHAT THE HELL IS THAT SUPPOSED TO MEAN? I'M TALKING ABOUT YOU!
HUH...
UH...
UM...
I MEAN...
AH!
LOOK THERE'S ONE! THERE'S A FIREFLY!
......
SO, HOW WERE YOU GONNA TELL THAT GIRL YOU LIKED HER BEFORE EVERYTHING WENT WRONG? WHAT WAS YOUR PLAN?
HUH?

I BET YOU HAD IT ALL PLANNED OUT, RIGHT?
COME ON, AS LONG AS WE'RE HERE YOU MIGHT AS WELL TELL ME. PUT ON YOUR WHOLE AKITSUKI LOVE CONFESSION SHOW!
WH-WHAT? SHUT UP!
WHAT WOULD BE THE POINT?
JUST HURRY UP AND DO IT ALREADY!
COME ON! I SAID DO IT!
HUH?
IS SHE THREATENING ME?
YOU'RE FUCKING NUTS.
HEY, WHERE ARE YOU GOING?

プチッ
PLOINK
KNOW WHAT THIS IS?
IT'S CALLED A FIREFLY FLOWER.
HUH?
ポワ…
GLOW
AH...
I'VE BEEN IN LOVE WITH YOU SINCE THE FIRST TIME I SAW YOU.
ビクッ
SHOCK
HUH?

WILL YOU...
...GO OUT WITH ME?
......
THAT WAS PRETTY MUCH IT.

OKAY.
...?
SURE...
I'LL GO OUT WITH YOU...

HUH?
WHA–?
WHAT ARE YOU DOING? STOP MESSING WITH ME!
I'M NOT...
TSSS
...MESSING WITH YOU.
ポゥ…
GLOW

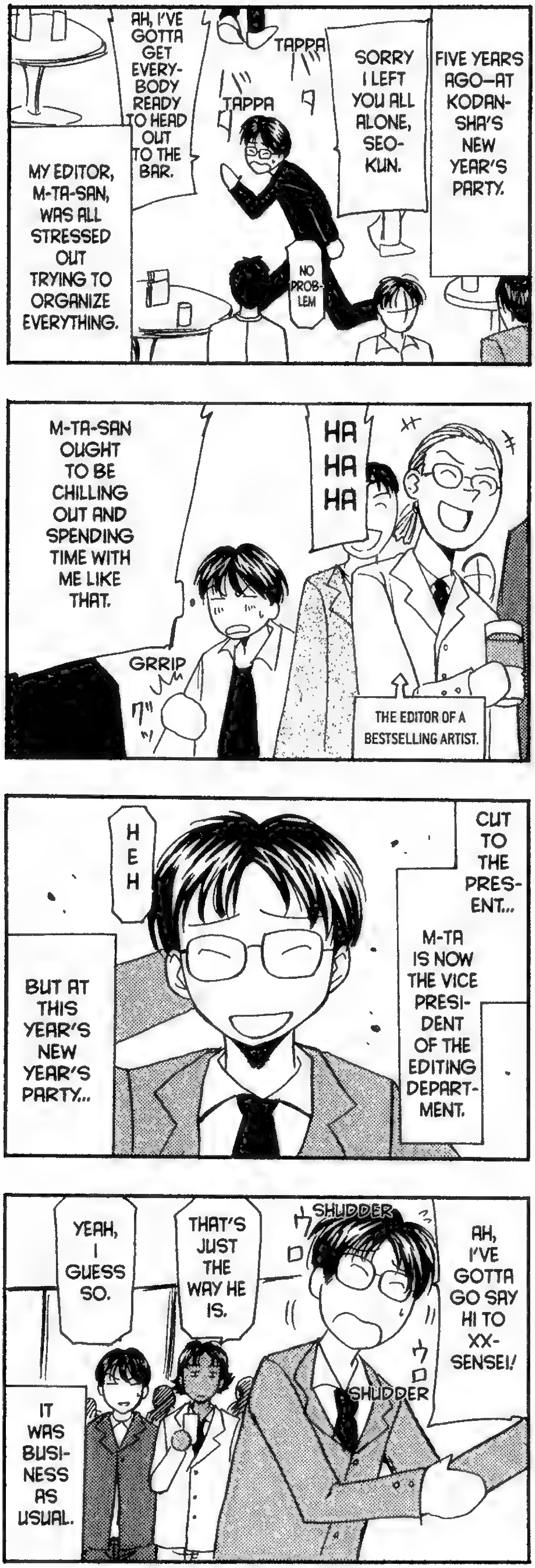
WH-? WHAT?

PSYCH! JUST KIDDING.
HUH?
YOU TURNED BEET RED! YOU'RE SUCH AN IDIOT.
DID YOU ACTUALLY THINK I WAS SERIOUS?
Y-YOU'RE SUCH A LITTLE—!
WHOA!

UH...
YEAH...
JUST KIDDING!
OF COURSE SHE WAS.
THERE'S NO WAY ASAHINA WOULD EVER SAY THAT FOR REAL.
IT'S SO PRETTY!
LOOK AT ALL THESE FIREFLIES.
Da Hui
I GUESS OUR EYES JUST WEREN'T ADJUSTED TO THE DARKNESS YET.

SUZUKA FOUR-PANEL THEATER NUMBER TWENTY-FOUR

GOALS - PART 2


FIVE YEARS AGO—AT KODANSHA'S NEW YEAR'S PARTY.
SORRY I LEFT YOU ALL ALONE, SEO-KUN.
TAPPA
TAPPA
AH, I'VE GOTTA GET EVERYBODY READY TO HEAD OUT TO THE BAR.
NO PROBLEM
MY EDITOR, M-TA-SAN, WAS ALL STRESSED OUT TRYING TO ORGANIZE EVERYTHING.
HA HA HA
THE EDITOR OF A BESTSELLING ARTIST.
M-TA-SAN OUGHT TO BE CHILLING OUT AND SPENDING TIME WITH ME LIKE THAT.
GRRIP
CUT TO THE PRESENT...
M-TA IS NOW THE VICE PRESIDENT OF THE EDITING DEPARTMENT.
HEH
BUT AT THIS YEAR'S NEW YEAR'S PARTY...
AH, I'VE GOTTA GO SAY HI TO XX-SENSEI!
SHUDDER
SHUDDER
THAT'S JUST THE WAY HE IS.
YEAH, I GUESS SO.
IT WAS BUSINESS AS USUAL.

#42

GIRLFRIEND

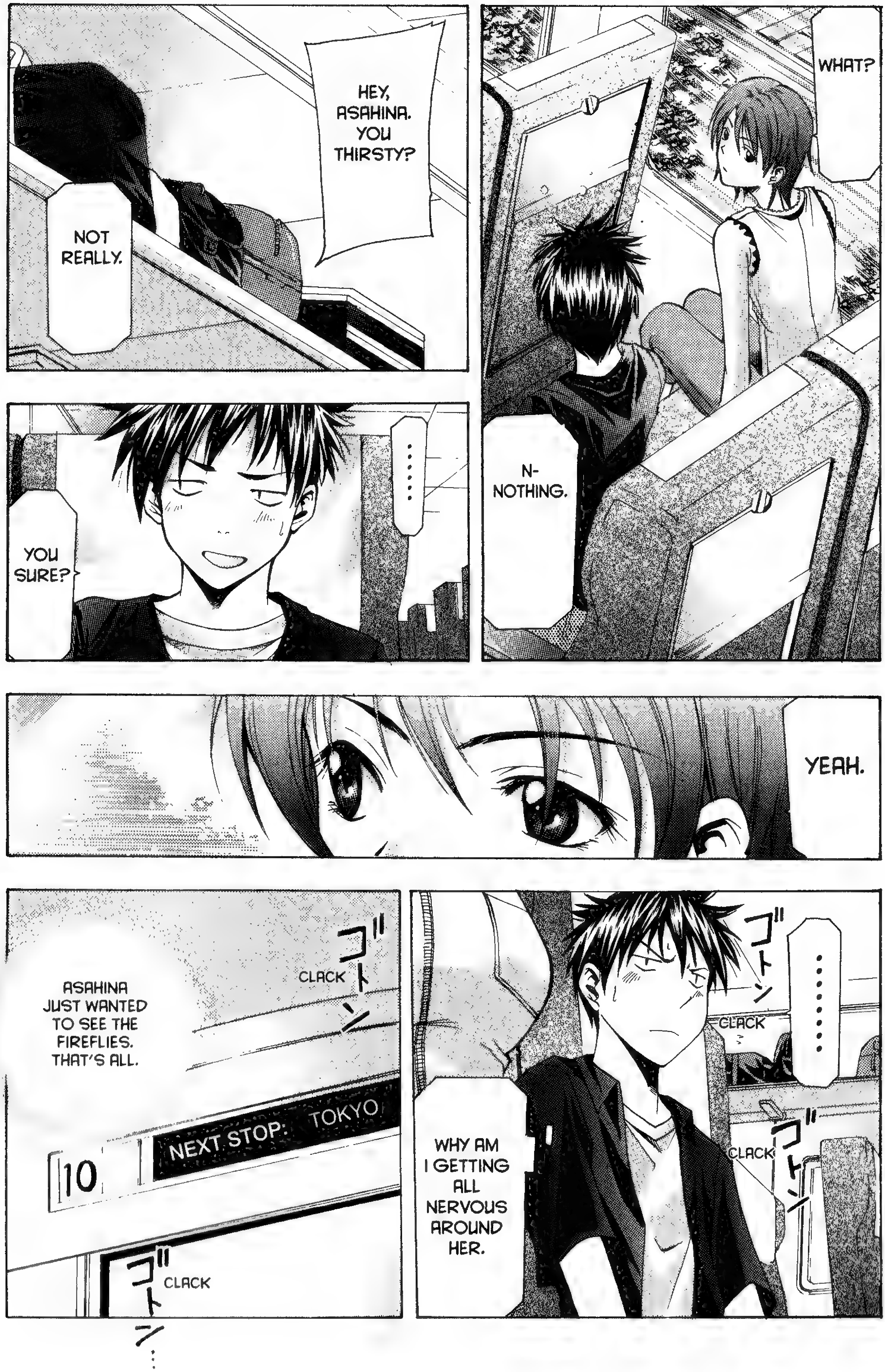
SUZUKA

SIZZLE
SIZZLE
ASAHI-YU BATHS
SIZZLE
SIZZLE
コツッ
STEP
DOINK
. . .
AH, GOOD MORNING, HONOKA-CHAN.
WHY ARE YOU UP SO EARLY?
AH, AYANO-SAN! GOOD MORNING.
FWUP
MEOW
UM... IS AKITSUKI-KUN...
SUZUKA-CHAN AND YAMATO-KIN AREN'T BACK YET.
STEP
STEP
YUUKA-SAN...

B-BUT THEY WERE SUPPOSED TO COME HOME YESTERDAY.
WELL, APPARENTLY SOMETHING CAME UP AND THEY HAD TO STAY ANOTHER NIGHT. THEY'LL BE BACK THIS AFTERNOON.
OH...
...OKAY.
MAYBE SOMETHING HAPPENED BETWEEN HIM AND SUZUKA-CHAN.
屋
この手
TEL 03-2
0315-
THAT'S WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU DON'T MAKE YOUR MOVE. YOU SHOULD HAVE TOLD HIM HOW YOU FELT AND THEN ASKED HIM OUT.
NOTHING HAPPENED BETWEEN HIM AND SUZUKA.
OH, REALLY? OKAY, THEN...
BUT IF YOU KEEP SLACKING OFF...
...YOU MIGHT END UP LOSING YAMATO-KUN.
カッ STEP
STEP カッ
カッ STEP
カッ STEP
BUT WE'RE ALREADY GOING OUT.

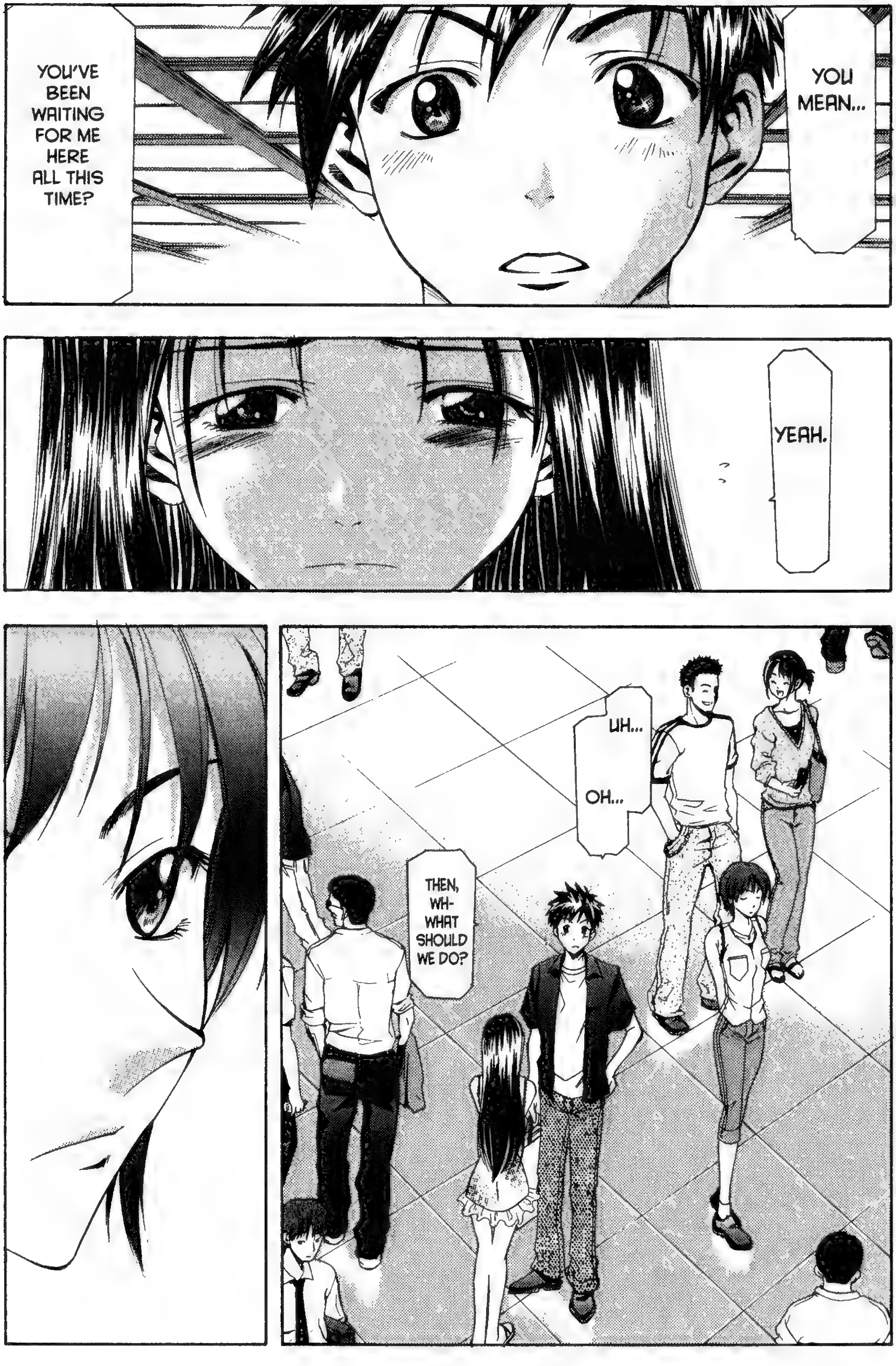
YAMATO'S NOT GOING ANYWHERE.
ゴオオオオ
VROON
ゴトン
CLACK
ちらっ
GLANCE
ゴトン
CLACK
ゴトン
CLACK
ゴトン
CLACK

SURE...
I'LL GO OUT WITH YOU.
....
I'M NOT MESSING WITH YOU.
TSSS
SHIT...
I ACTUALLY THOUGHT SHE WAS SERIOUS FOR A SECOND THERE.


WHAT?
N-NOTHING.
HEY, ASAHINA. YOU THIRSTY?
NOT REALLY.
......
YOU SURE?
YEAH.
ゴトン
CLACK
....
ゴトン
CLACK
WHY AM I GETTING ALL NERVOUS AROUND HER.
ゴトン
CLACK
ASAHINA JUST WANTED TO SEE THE FIREFLIES. THAT'S ALL.
NEXT STOP: TOKYO
10
ゴトン...
CLACK

WHAT DO YOU WANT TO DO ABOUT LUNCH?
IF YOU DON'T HAVE ANYTHING PLANNED, THEN WE MAY AS WELL GET SOMETHING TO EAT BEFORE WE GO BACK.
ザワ
CHATTER
YEAH.
ザワ
CHATTER
BUT I'M KIND OF WORRIED ABOUT MY BAGS AND STUFF.
DON'T WORRY ABOUT YOUR BAGS.
I CALLED AYANO-SAN YESTERDAY AND SHE SAID THAT THE CAPTAIN BROUGHT ALL YOUR STUFF OVER.
OH.
WELL, OKAY THEN.
YEAH, SO YOU CAN JUST RELAX AND HAVE SOME LUNCH.
I THINK I'LL JUST GO STRAIGHT TO SCHOOL.

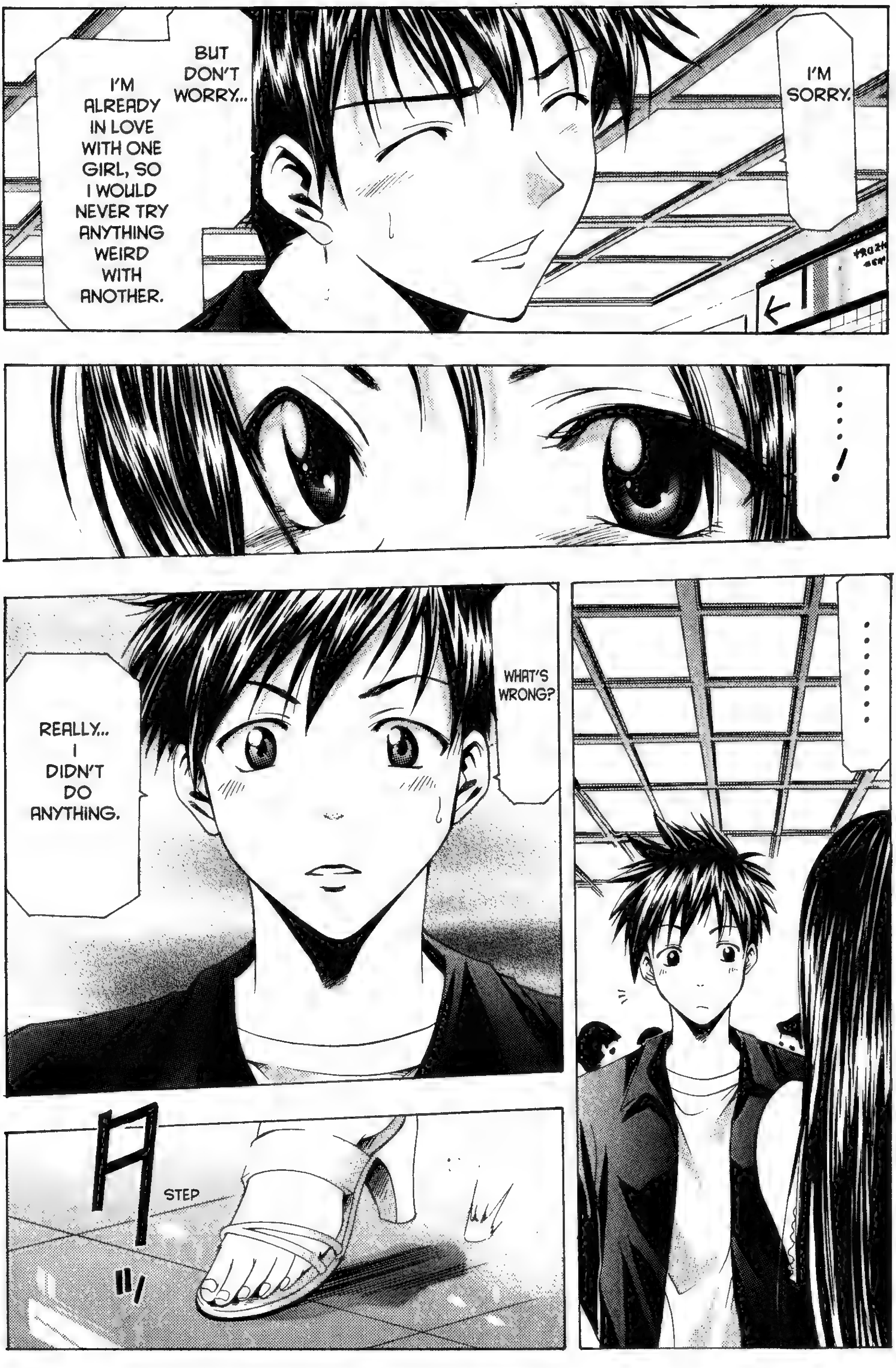
HO-NOKA-CHAN?
AH!
AKITSUKI-KUN!
WH-WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?
......
A-AYANO-SAN SAID YOU'D BE BACK AROUND NOON SO...


YOU MEAN...
YOU'VE BEEN WAITING FOR ME HERE ALL THIS TIME?
YEAH.
UH... OH...
THEN, WH-WHAT SHOULD WE DO?

WELL, BYE. I'M GONNA HEAD BACK.
SWIP
A-ASA-HINA...
DON'T WORRY.
I'LL PAY BACK ALL THE MONEY YOU LENT ME.
O-OKAY..
NO RUSH OR ANYTHING.
カッ
CLOPPA
カッ
カッ
CLOPPA
カッ
......
MAYBE SOMETHING HAPPENED BETWEEN HIM AND SUZUKA-CHAN.

ギュッ…
SQUEEZE
WHAT ARE YOU DOING, HONOKA-CHAN.
U-UM... I WAS JUST TRYING TO HELP CARRY YOUR BAG.
BUT MY BAG'S IN THIS HAND.
ガサッ
RUSTLE
HUH? OH...IS IT?

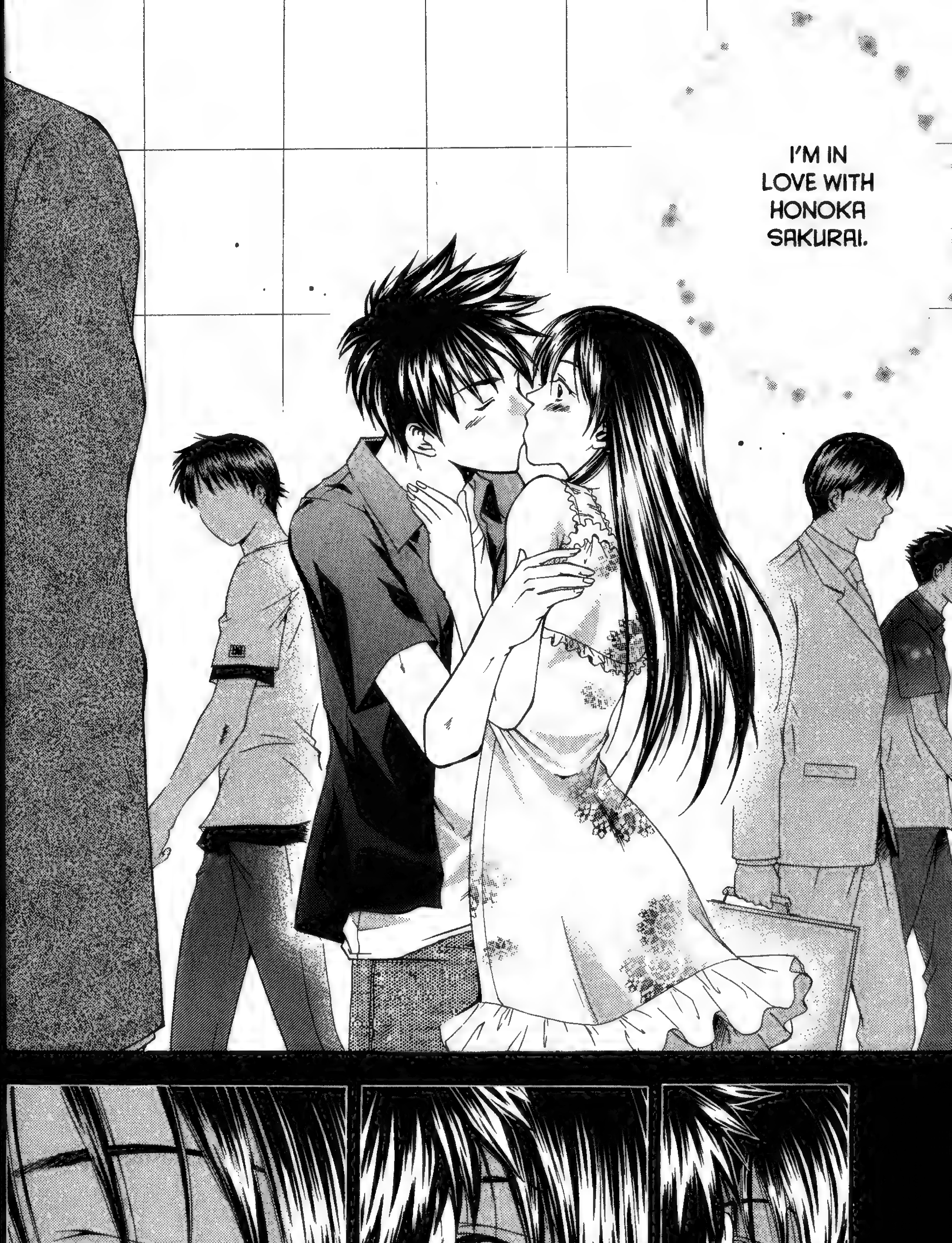
I'LL CARRY IT FOR YOU.
THAT'S OKAY. IT'S NOT THAT HEAVY.
R-REALLY...
OKAY THEN.
UM...
....
I GUESS... YOU WERE WORRIED ABOUT ME... HUH?
WHAT?
I... I DIDN'T SAY THAT... UM...
......

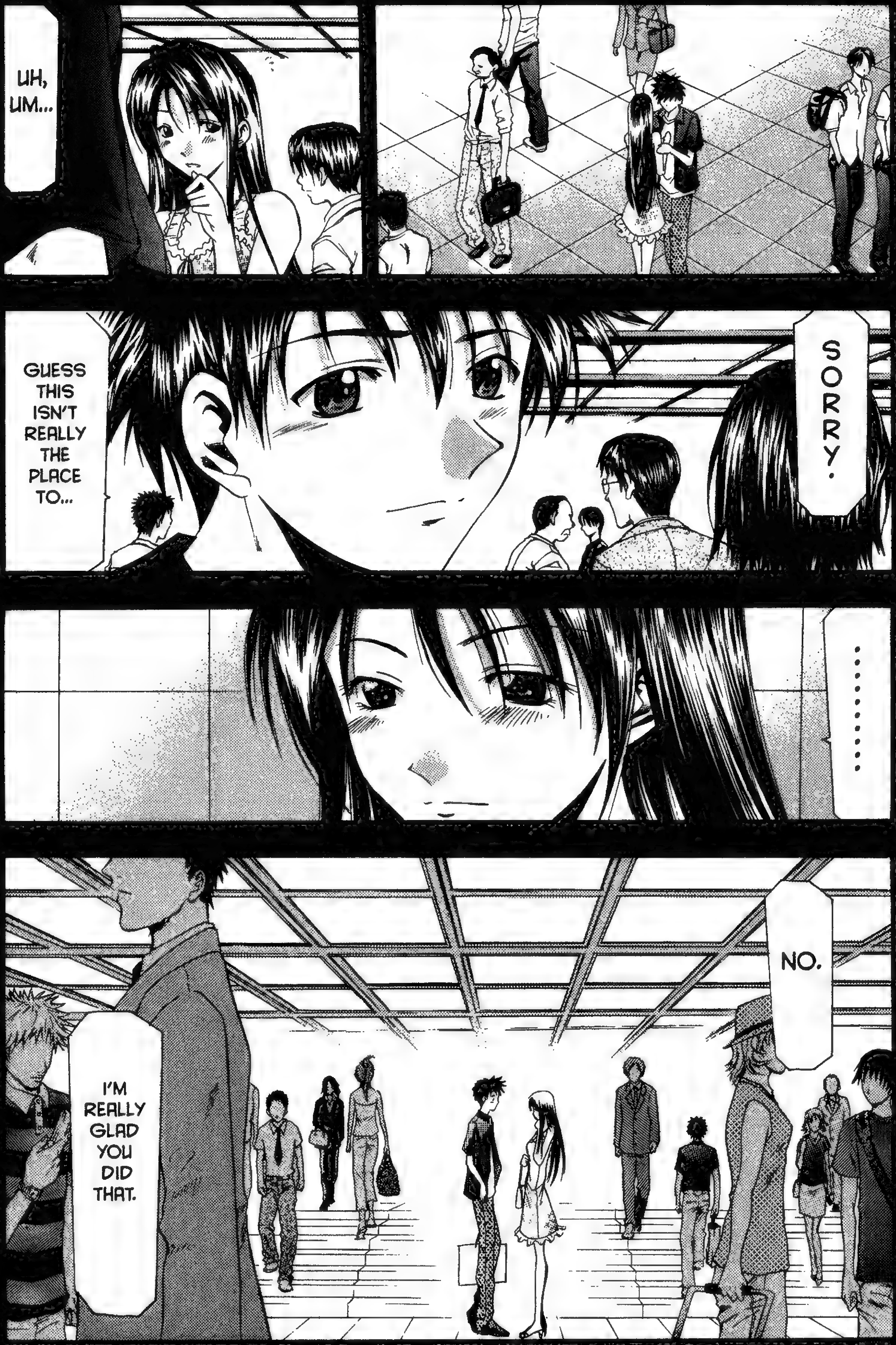

I'M SORRY.
BUT DON'T WORRY...
I'M ALREADY IN LOVE WITH ONE GIRL, SO I WOULD NEVER TRY ANYTHING WEIRD WITH ANOTHER.
....!
....
WHAT'S WRONG?
REALLY... I DIDN'T DO ANYTHING.
STEP

STARE
STARE
WHOA!
HEY!
WHAT THE HECK ARE YOU–
THAT'S THE FIRST TIME...
HUH?
I-IT IS?
I'VE ACTUALLY...
...YOU EVER TOLD ME YOU LOVED ME.

...BEEN KIND OF WORRIED.
I THOUGHT MAYBE YOU DIDN'T REALLY LOVE ME.
HONOKA-CHAN...
ALL THIS TIME SHE'D BEEN WAITING TO HEAR IT, BUT...
I NEVER EVEN TOLD HER I LOVED HER.
AH... I'M SORRY.
I'M EMBARRASSING YOU, AREN'T I. I GUESS THIS ISN'T REALLY THE BEST PLACE TO TALK ABOUT IT.

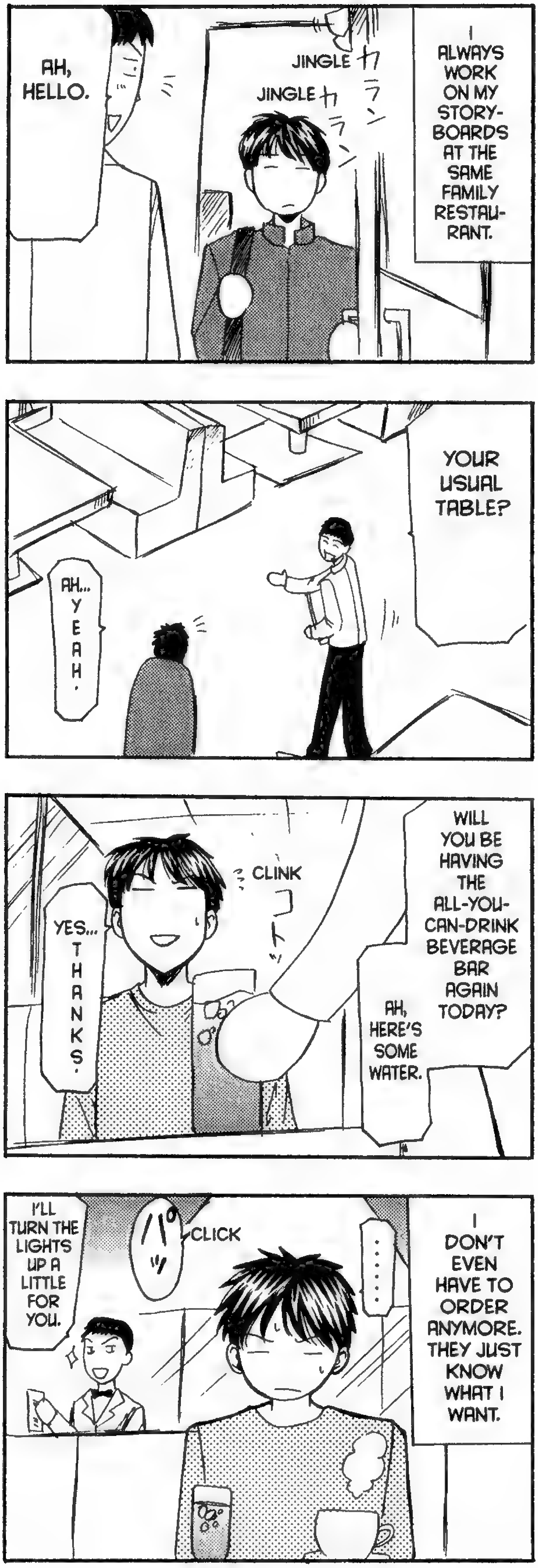
BUT IT'S OKAY.
I STOPPED WORRYING ONCE I SAW YOUR FACE, AKITSUKI-KUN.
ド THUMP
キッ THUMP
I GUESS IT DOESN'T REALLY MATTER...
...HOW ASAHINA FEELS ABOUT ME ANYMORE.
FWIP
YEAH, IT'S OKAY.
BE-CAUSE...

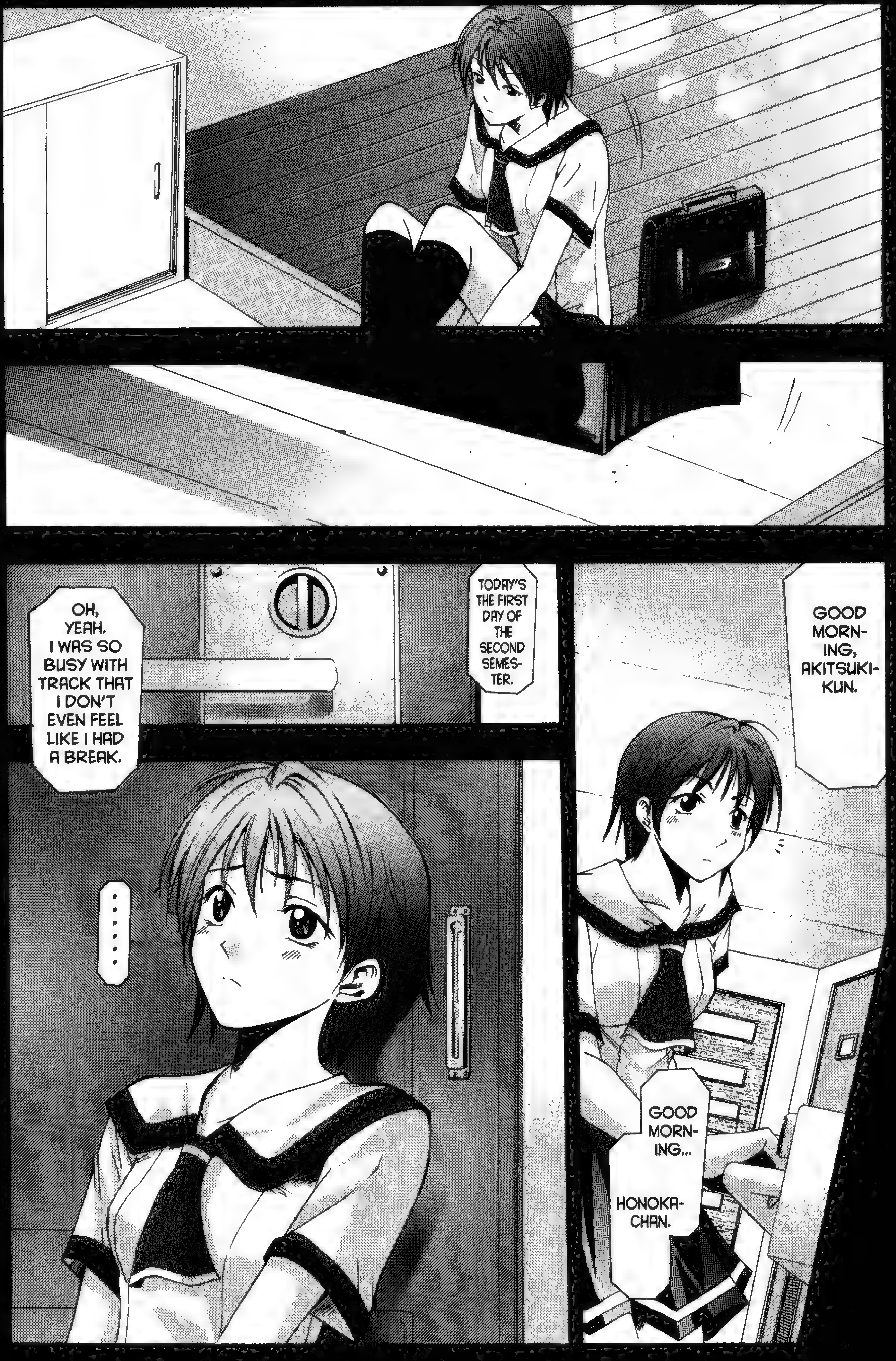

I'M IN LOVE WITH HONOKA SAKURAI.


UH, UM...
SORRY.
GUESS THIS ISN'T REALLY THE PLACE TO...
......
NO.
I'M REALLY GLAD YOU DID THAT.

SUZUKA FOUR-PANEL THEATER NUMBER TWENTY-FIVE

THE REGULAR


I ALWAYS WORK ON MY STORYBOARDS AT THE SAME FAMILY RESTAURANT.
JINGLE カラン
JINGLE カラン
AH, HELLO.
YOUR USUAL TABLE?
AH... YEAH.
WILL YOU BE HAVING THE ALL-YOU-CAN-DRINK BEVERAGE BAR AGAIN TODAY?
AH, HERE'S SOME WATER.
CLINK コトッ
YES... THANKS.
I DON'T EVEN HAVE TO ORDER ANYMORE. THEY JUST KNOW WHAT I WANT.
......
CLICK パッ
I'LL TURN THE LIGHTS UP A LITTLE FOR YOU.


GOOD MORNING, AKITSUKI-KUN.
GOOD MORNING... HONOKA-CHAN.
TODAY'S THE FIRST DAY OF THE SECOND SEMESTER.
OH, YEAH. I WAS SO BUSY WITH TRACK THAT I DON'T EVEN FEEL LIKE I HAD A BREAK.
......

SUZUKA

#43
INSTINCT

SO?
DID YOU KISS SAKURAI YET?
SPLLRT
CLANK
H-HOW'D YOU EVEN KNOW WE WERE GOING OUT?
GIVE ME A BREAK. YOU WERE SNEAKING OUT TO SEE HER EVERY FREAKING NIGHT.
ACTUALLY, IT SEEMS LIKE EVERYONE IN MY BUILDING KNOWS, TOO.
THAT'S CAUSE IT'S WRITTEN ALL OVER YOUR FACE.
WELL, IT'S NO BIG DEAL. I MEAN, YOU TWO ARE JUST PLAYING HOUSE ANYWAY.
IT'S NOT LIKE YOU'RE GOING OUT FOR REAL.
YOU'RE SUCH AN IDIOT. I AL-READY KISSED HER, MAN.
ACTUALLY, THE WHOLE THING STARTED WITH A KISS.

HOLY SHIT!
YOU KISSED HER! YOU'VE FINALLY BECOME A MAN.
SH- SHUT UP! KEEP YOUR VOICE DOWN!
SO?
WHAT HAPPENED AFTER THAT?
HUH?
DID YOU DO HER YET?
SPLRRRRT
GOD, YOU'RE SO GROSS.
YOU STUPID FUCKING PERVERT.
YOU'RE THE ONE WHO'S STUPID.
YOU KISSED HER, BUT YOU DIDN'T EVEN CLOSE THE DEAL?

JUST BECAUSE WE KISSED, DOESN'T MEAN...
HERE.
ギュッ
SQUEEZE
HUH?
WHAT'S THIS?
W-MARK
SAGAMI ORIGINAL
Hi-Polymer Urethane Condoms
Extra thin and Natural
OPEN
IT'S CALLED A CONDOM, MAN.
I PREFER THE BANZAI PULLOUT TECHNIQUE, BUT YOU'D PROBABLY LOSE YOUR LOAD BEFORE YOU MADE IT OUT.
ガタッ
CLINK
MY WHAT?
JUST USE IT WHENEVER YOU'RE READY, CHERRY BOY.
BUT DON'T FORGET, MAN, YOU GUYS ARE GOING OUT NOW...
SO, IT HAS TO HAPPEN AT SOME POINT.
....

ASAHIYU BATHS
SAGIMI ORIGINAL
I CAN'T BELIEVE...
HE GAVE THIS TO ME.
HOW DO YOU EVEN USE THESE THINGS?
AH... WHY DO THEY EVEN CALL THEM RUBBERS? IT'S MADE OF LATEX.
WAIT...
WHAT THE HELL AM I DOING?
コン
PLOP
I'M NOT EVEN GONNA NEED THIS THING.

ボフッ
FLUMP
AH...
OH YEAH... AYANO-SAN WENT OUT TONIGHT, SO SHE DIDN'T MAKE DINNER.
AND MIHO-CHAN SAID SHE WAS GONNA GO OUT TO EAT WITH A FRIEND.
WELL...
トンッ
PLUNK
GUESS I'LL HEAD TO THE CONVENIENCE STORE. I'LL JUST GET SOME CROQUETTES.
ピンポーン
DING
DONG
HUH?
ASAHINA?
NAH, IT CAN'T BE.
CREAK
IT'S PROBABLY THOSE TWO DRUNKS OR MAYBE THE NEWSPAPER GIRL.

GOOD EVENING.
HUH? WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE AT THIS HOUR, HONOKA-CHAN?
WELL...YOU SAID AYANO-SAN WASN'T GONNA BE HERE THIS EVENING, RIGHT AKITSUKI-KUN?
SO, I THOUGHT MAYBE YOU HADN'T HAD DINNER YET.

WHAT? YOU BOUGHT ME DINNER? YOU DIDN'T HAVE TO DO THAT.
ACTUALLY, I WAS THINKING I'D MAKE SOMETHING FOR YOU, BUT...
カサッ
RUSTLE
AH... DID YOU ALREADY EAT?
301
NHK 3-5
YAMATO AKITSUKI
N-NO!
I HAVEN'T EATEN.
GOOD... WELL THEN.
くすっ
GIGGLE
DON'T EXPECT ANYTHING FANCY, OKAY?
Y-YEAH. G-GO AHEAD.
MAKE SOMETHING FOR ME... PLEASE.
WHATEVER IT IS, I'M SURE IT'LL BE BETTER THAN SOME LOUSY CONVENIENCE STORE BENTO.
OKAY...
I GUESS I'D BETTER GET STARTED.
ASAHIYU BATHS

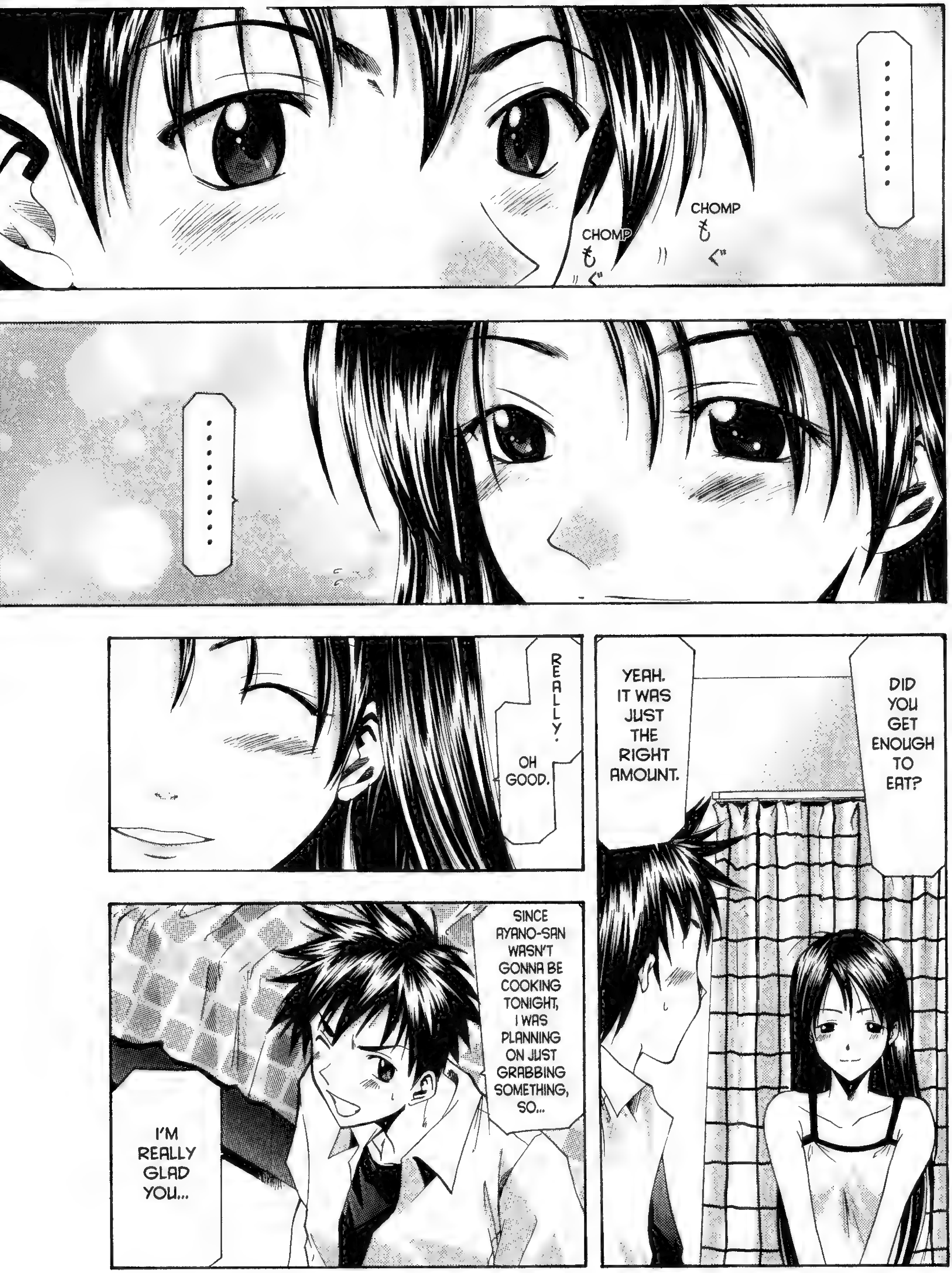
CHOP トン
CHOP トン
CHOP トン
トン
CHOP トントン
CHOP トントン
CREAK ボヘー
……
HO-HONOKA-CHAN...
...IS COOKING ME DINNER IN MY OWN ROOM... IN AN APRON.
SHE WENT TO ALL THIS TROUBLE JUST FOR ME.
SHE'S SO SWEET.

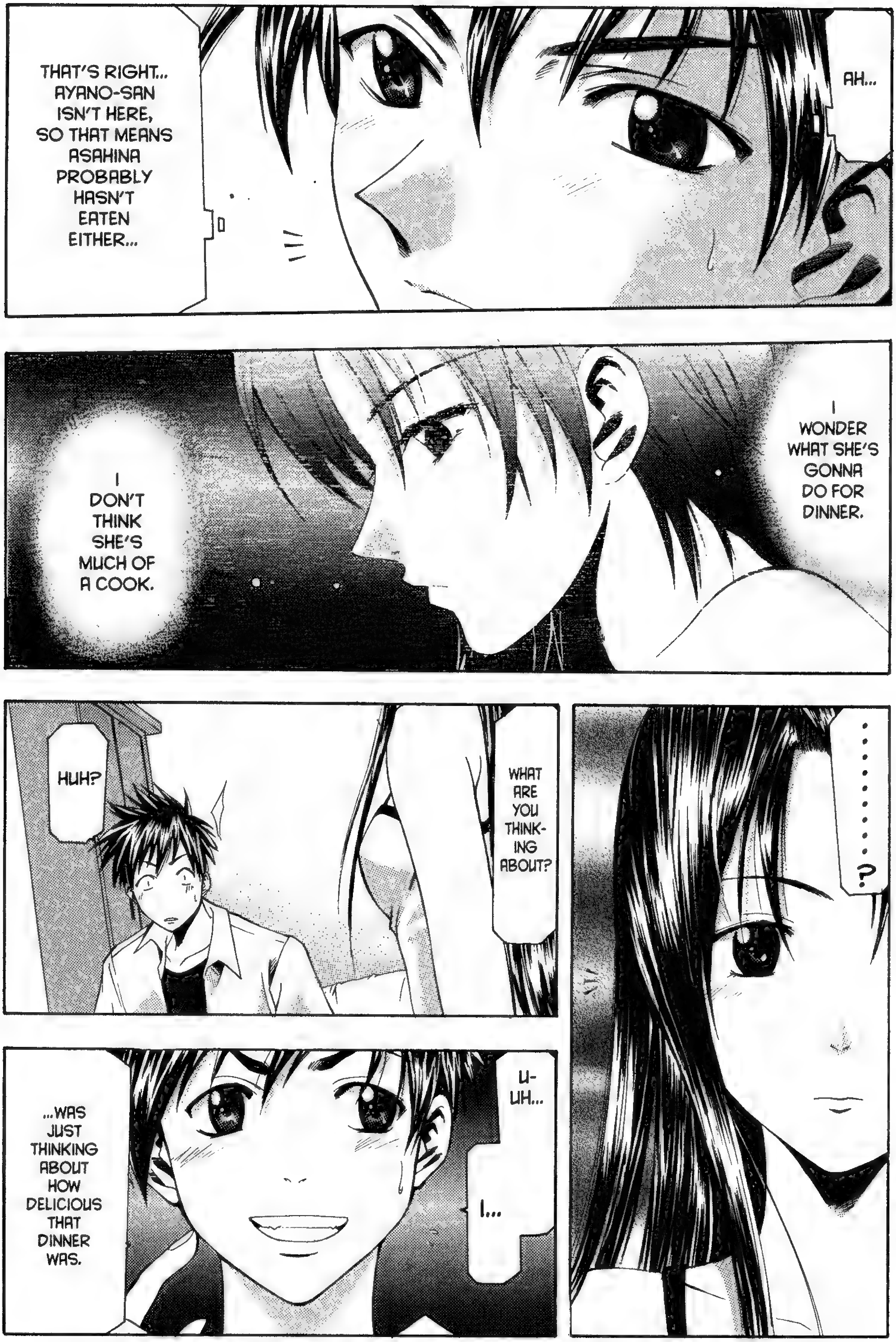
SORRY!
IT'S GONNA TAKE A LITTLE BIT LONGER. WHY DON'T YOU WATCH SOME TV?
O-OKAY.
WHOA!
ドキ
THUMP
ドキ
THUMP
ドキ
THUMP
IT'S ALMOST LIKE WE'RE LIVING TOGETHER.
HUH?
コロン
PLUP
SAGAMI ORIGINAL
WAHH!
FWUP
I CAN'T BELIEVE I LEFT THAT SITTING THERE.

AKITSUKI KUN, WHERE'S YOUR SOY SAUCE.
!!
THWUP
GARBAGE
WH-WHAT'S WRONG?
N-NOTHING.
THE SOY SAUCE IS ON THE TOP SHELF OF THE CUPBOARD.
OKAY.
THAT WAS CLOSE.
IF SHE SAW ME WITH THIS THING, WHO KNOWS WHAT SHE'D THINK.
BUT DON'T FORGET, MAN, YOU GUYS ARE GOING OUT NOW...
....
YOINK
W-WELL... MAYBE I SHOULD JUST HANG ON TO IT.
SO, IT HAS TO HAPPEN AT SOME POINT.
AKITSUKI-KUN, WHERE'S YOUR SALT.
ズボオォ
FWUMP
WH-WHAT THE HECK ARE YOU DOING?
N-NOTHING.

カチャ
CLINK
カチャ
カチャ
CLINK
……
HOW IS IT?
MMM. IT'S REALLY GOOD!
CHOMP
モリ
CHOMP
モリ
YOU COULD BE ON IRON CHEF, HONOKA-CHAN.
I'M SO GLAD YOU LIKE IT.
I KINDA WOLFED IT DOWN.
FWICK
HERE GOES MY LAST BITE.

SWIP
HUH?
OKAY
OPEN UP AND SAY AHHHHH.
HUH?
OH...
OKAY.
GULP
パクッ


……
CHOMP もぐ
CHOMP もぐ
……
DID YOU GET ENOUGH TO EAT?
YEAH. IT WAS JUST THE RIGHT AMOUNT.
REALLY.
OH GOOD.
SINCE AYANO-SAN WASN'T GONNA BE COOKING TONIGHT, I WAS PLANNING ON JUST GRABBING SOMETHING, SO...
I'M REALLY GLAD YOU...

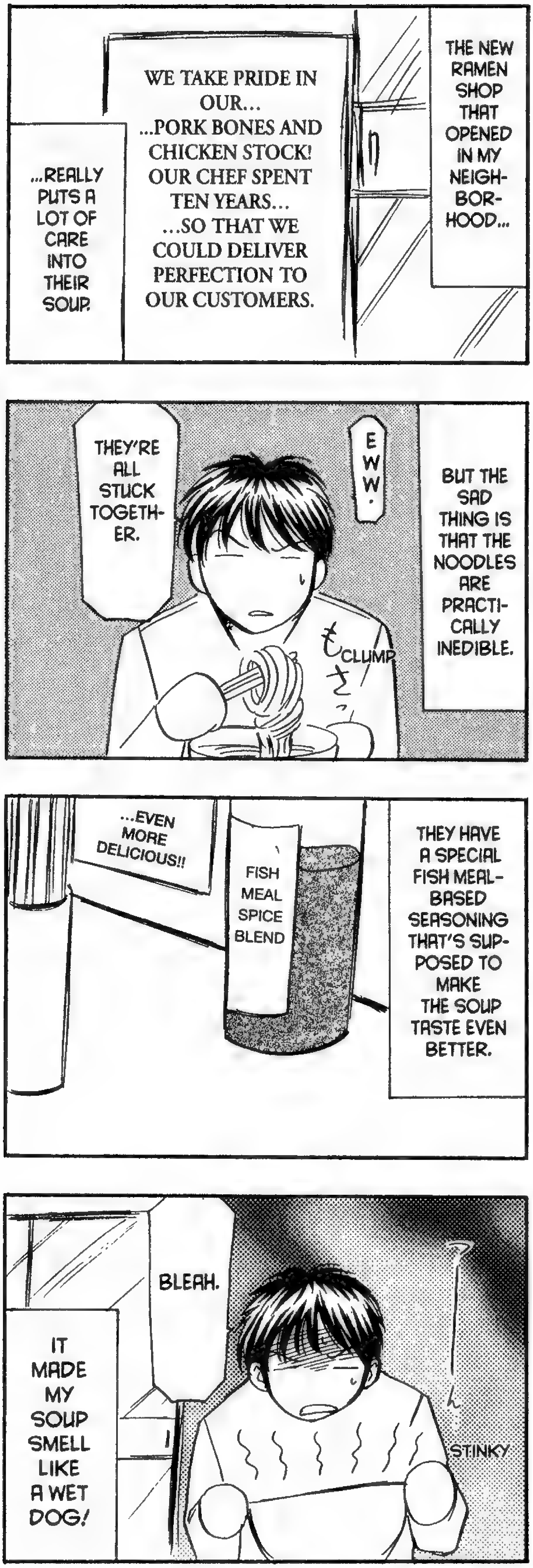

AH...
THAT'S RIGHT... AYANO-SAN ISN'T HERE, SO THAT MEANS ASAHINA PROBABLY HASN'T EATEN EITHER...
I WONDER WHAT SHE'S GONNA DO FOR DINNER.
I DON'T THINK SHE'S MUCH OF A COOK.
.........?
WHAT ARE YOU THINKING ABOUT?
HUH?
U-UH...
I...
...WAS JUST THINKING ABOUT HOW DELICIOUS THAT DINNER WAS.

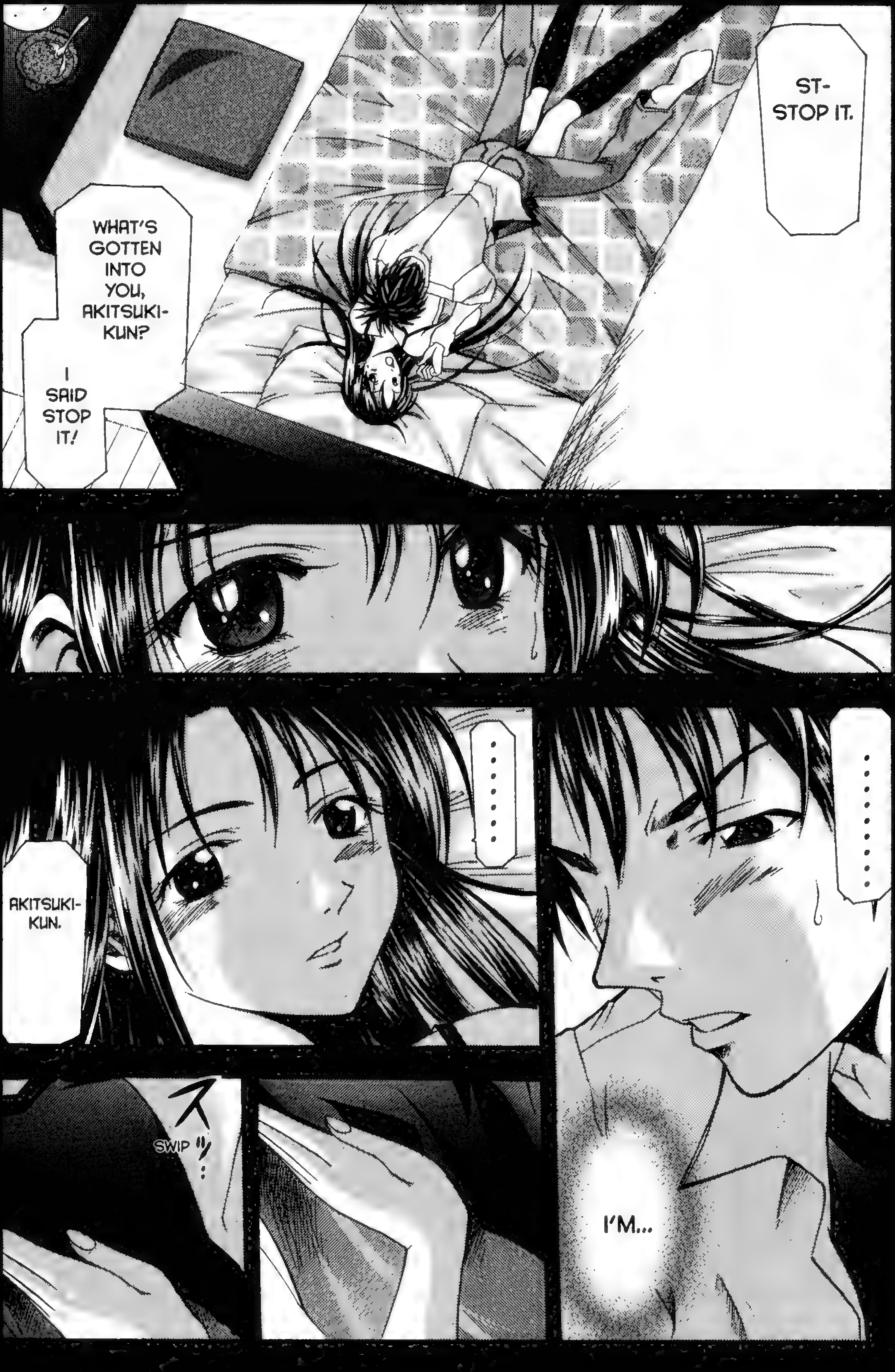
……
OH.
AH... I'LL WASH THE DISHES.
ガタッ
CLANK
AH...
WHAT THE HELL AM I THINKING?
グイッ
YANK
WHY SHOULD I EVEN CARE ABOUT ASAHINA?
HUH?
A-AKITSUKI-KUN! WATCH OUT!

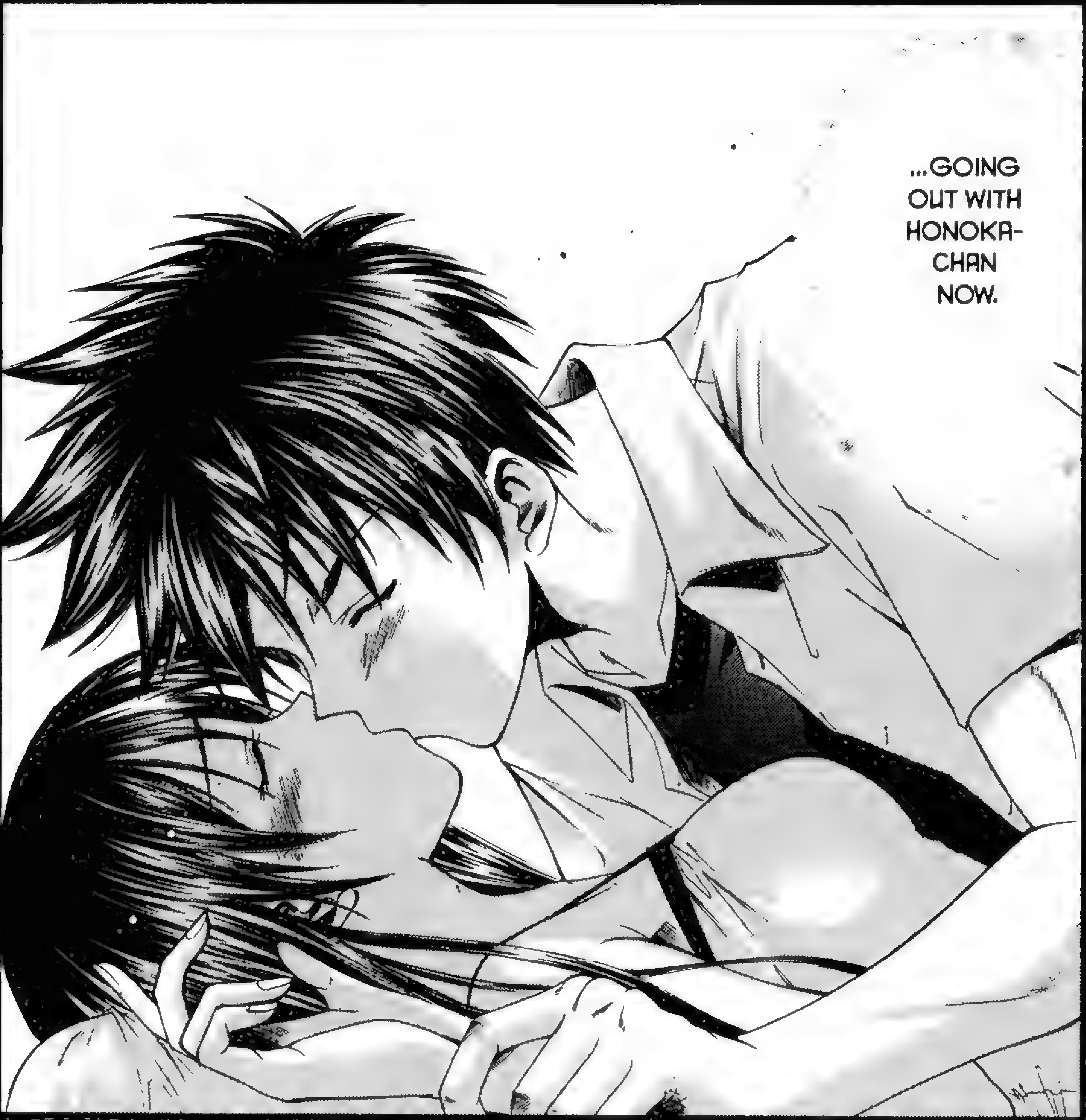
FWUMP
……
H..HEY... WHAT'S WRONG, AKITSUKI-KUN.
YOU LOOK SO SCARY...
ギュッ
SQUEEZE
HUH?
STO—
I'M...
...GOING OUT WITH HONOKA-CHAN NOW!

SUZUKA
FOUR-PANEL THEATER
NUMBER TWENTY-SIX

THE SOUP CONNOISSEUR


THE NEW RAMEN SHOP THAT OPENED IN MY NEIGHBORHOOD...
WE TAKE PRIDE IN OUR... ...PORK BONES AND CHICKEN STOCK! OUR CHEF SPENT TEN YEARS... ...SO THAT WE COULD DELIVER PERFECTION TO OUR CUSTOMERS.
...REALLY PUTS A LOT OF CARE INTO THEIR SOUP.
BUT THE SAD THING IS THAT THE NOODLES ARE PRACTICALLY INEDIBLE.
EWW.
THEY'RE ALL STUCK TOGETHER.
CLUMP
THEY HAVE A SPECIAL FISH MEAL-BASED SEASONING THAT'S SUPPOSED TO MAKE THE SOUP TASTE EVEN BETTER.
FISH MEAL SPICE BLEND
...EVEN MORE DELICIOUS!!
BLEAH.
IT MADE MY SOUP SMELL LIKE A WET DOG!
STINKY


ST-STOP IT.
WHAT'S GOTTEN INTO YOU, AKITSUKI-KUN?
I SAID STOP IT!
......
......
AKITSUKI-KUN.
I'M...
ス
SWIP


...GOING OUT WITH HONOKA-CHAN NOW.

SUZUKA

#44 REGRET

ドキン…
THUMP
ドキン…
THUMP
ドキン
THUMP
ドキン…
THUMP
ギュッ
SQUEEZE
ビクッ
SHIVER
AHH…
……

!
I SAID STOP!!
FWUP
YOU'RE...
...SCARING ME, AKITSUKI-KUN.
HUH...
WHOOSH
AH... HONOKA-CHAN.
KYA!
CLICK

……
HONOKA-CHAN...
カン CLOPPA
カン CLOPPA
……
ギッ CREAK
カン CLOPPA
カン CLOPPA
HEY?
WHAT'S WRONG?
ASAHINA...

......
I BET YOU SAID SOMETHING STUPID AND STARTED A FIGHT, DIDN'T YOU, YAMATO-KUN.
......
IT'S...
...NOTHING.
YOU DON'T HAVE AN OUNCE OF TACT YAMATO-KUN.
YOU ALWAYS SCREW EVERYTHING UP.

IT'S NONE OF YOUR GODDAMN BUSINESS. JUST LEAVE ME ALONE.
ギー
CREAK
AH... WAIT...
バタン
SLAM

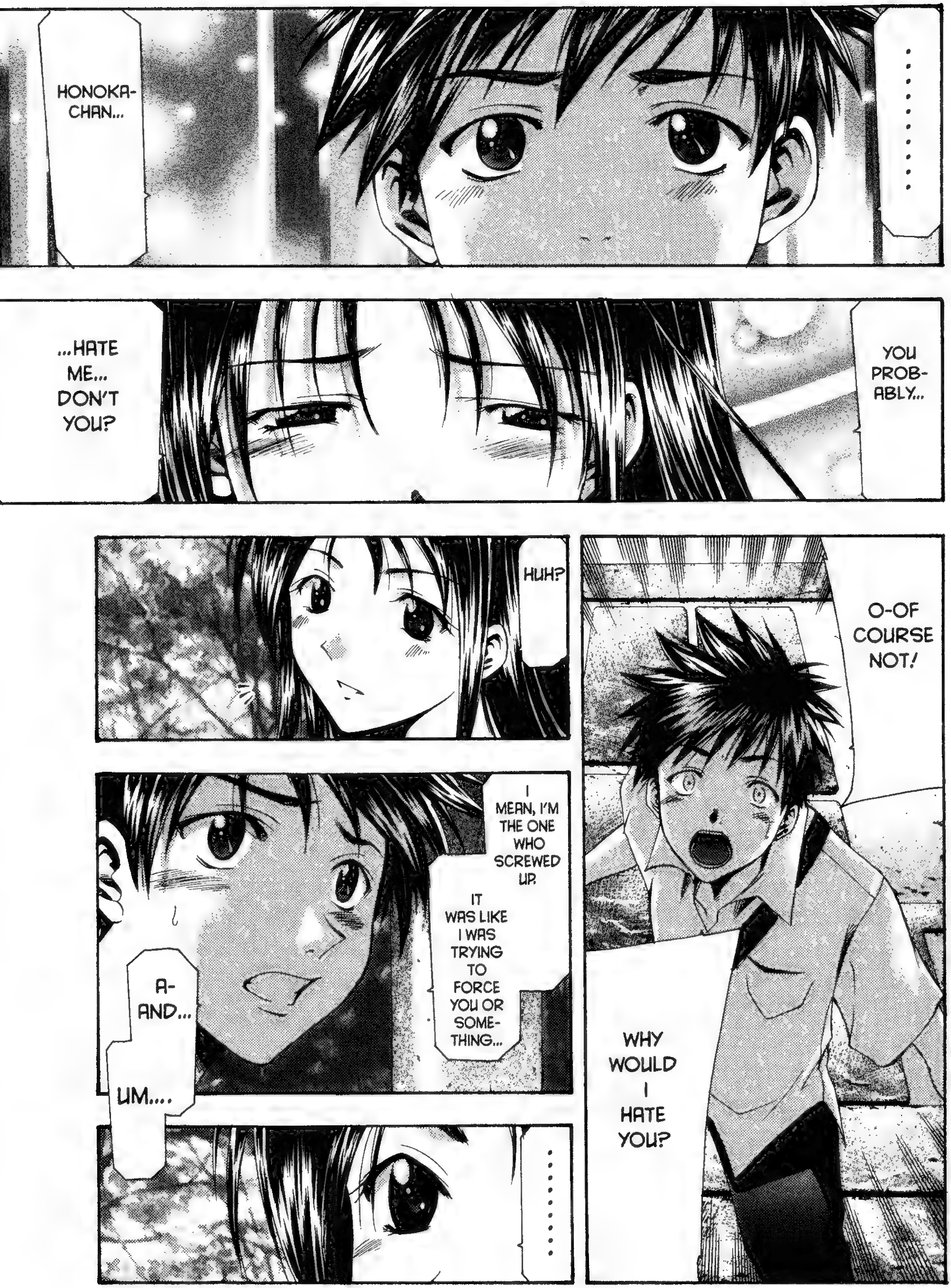
HEY! YOU'RE SLOWING DOWN!
TSSS
TSSS
TSSS
HURRY UP OR I'LL TACK ON ANOTHER LAP.
HEY, SAKURAI-SAN, GET ME A POCARI.
CHATTER
CHATTER
HUH? I DON'T THINK SHE'S HERE TODAY.
OH. I WONDER IF SHE'S SICK OR SOMETHING.
YEAH, MAYBE.
....
IT'S BECAUSE OF LAST NIGHT...
WHY DID I KEEP THINKING ABOUT ASAHINA?
DOES THAT MEAN I STILL HAVE LINGERING FEELINGS FOR HER OR SOMETHING?

DID...
...I THINK THAT COMING ON TO HONOKA-CHAN LIKE THAT WOULD MAKE ME FORGET ASAHINA? WHAT'S WRONG WITH ME?
YOU'RE SCARING ME...
...AKITSUKI-KUN.
ズキン…
STING
I'D BETTER GO APOLOGIZE TO HER.
IT MIGHT ALREADY BE TOO LATE, BUT...
......

SHUSSEI INARI SHRINE
WELL, HERE I AM...
NOW WHAT AM I GONNA SAY TO HER?
SHE MIGHT NOT EVEN WANNA TALK TO ME.
CLOPPA
CLOPPA

AH...
タッ
FWOOSH
AH...!
W-WAIT!
I'M REALLY SORRY ABOUT YESTERDAY.
I KNOW YOU DON'T WANT TO SEE ME, BUT...

TH—
THAT'S NOT TRUE!
I DON'T HATE YOU OR ANYTHING, AKITSUKI-KUN.
HUH?
BUT AFTER WHAT HAPPENED YESTERDAY...
RUSTLE
I JUST... WASN'T SURE HOW TO ACT...WHEN I SAW YOU AGAIN.
I- I'D...
...NEVER DONE ANYTHING LIKE THAT BEFORE.


....
HONOKA-CHAN...
YOU PROBABLY...
...HATE ME... DON'T YOU?
O-OF COURSE NOT!
WHY WOULD I HATE YOU?
HUH?
I MEAN, I'M THE ONE WHO SCREWED UP.
IT WAS LIKE I WAS TRYING TO FORCE YOU OR SOMETHING...
A-AND...
UM....
....

トン…
STEP
I'M SO HAPPY.
YOU DON'T LOOK SCARY ANYMORE. YOU HAVE THAT USUAL AKITSUKI-KUN LOOK ON YOUR FACE.
HUH?
AS LONG AS YOU STAY LIKE THIS...
...I WOULDN'T MIND IF YOU THREW ME TO THE GROUND, AND...
....
HUH?

AH!
N-N-NO! I-I DON'T MEAN RIGHT NOW...I JUST... UM...
ガクン NOD
ガクン NOD
I-I KNOW. IT'S OKAY. IT'S OKAY. I GET IT.
....
カァァァ BLUSH
UM...
W-WELL...
DO YOU THINK MAYBE YOU COULD MAKE DINNER FOR ME AGAIN SOME TIME...?
SURE.

WELL...I GUESS I SHOULD HEAD BACK.
OKAY.
SEE YOU TOMORROW.
OKAY.
SHOULD I COME BY YOUR PLACE ON THE WAY TO SCHOOL?
Y-YEAH.
I GUESS...
IT'S A GOOD THING I CAME TO APOLOGIZE.

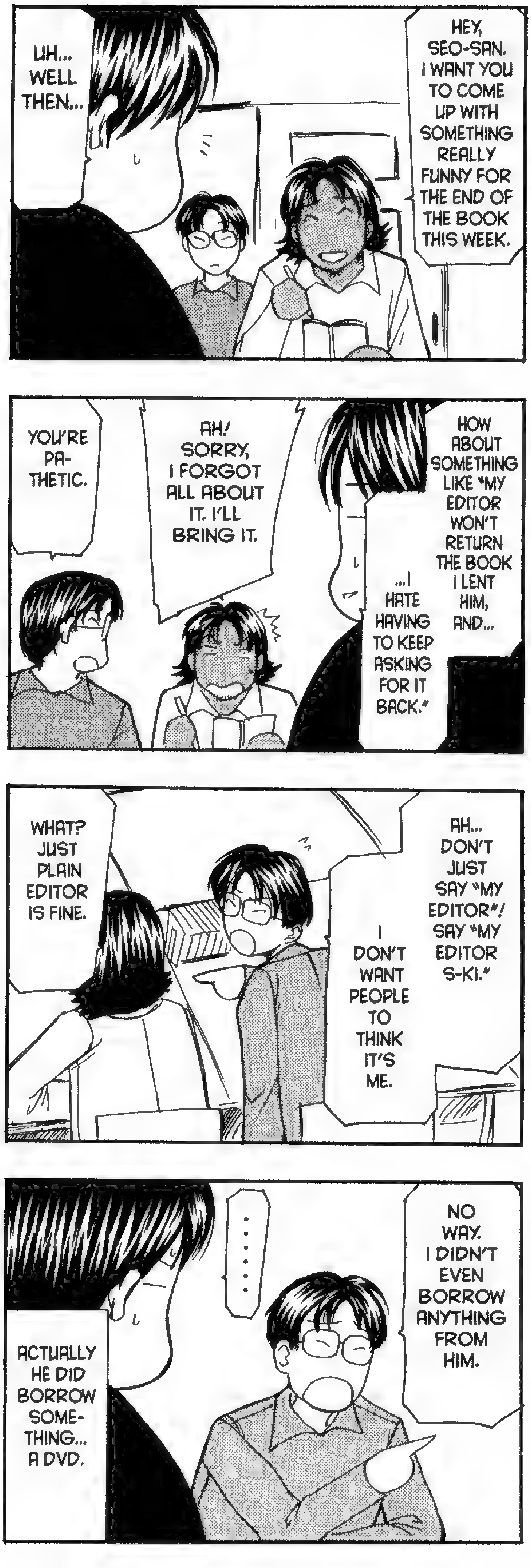
ALL RIGHT, THAT'S IT!
I'M NEVER GONNA HURT HONOKA-CHAN AGAIN.
ASAHIYU BATHS
カン
CLOP
カン
CLOP
カン
HUH?

WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU DOING STANDING THERE, ASAHINA...
AH!
WH-WHAT WAS I DOING? N-NOTHING. I JUST GOT HOME.
OH YEAH? LOOKED LIKE YOU WERE KIND OF SPACING OUT.
ASAHI-YU BATHS
WHAT-EVER... SO...
DID YOU AND HONOKA-CHAN MAKE UP?
YEAH...
I THINK SO.
O-OH...
YOU DID?
WELL... THAT'S GOOD.
......?
WHAT'S WITH HER?

CLICK
DINNER'S ALL READY.
YOU'D BETTER GET DRESSED AND COME DOWN.
AH... WAIT.
SLAM
BONK
WHAT AM I...
...DOING?

SUZUKA FOUR-PANEL THEATER NUMBER TWENTY-SEVEN

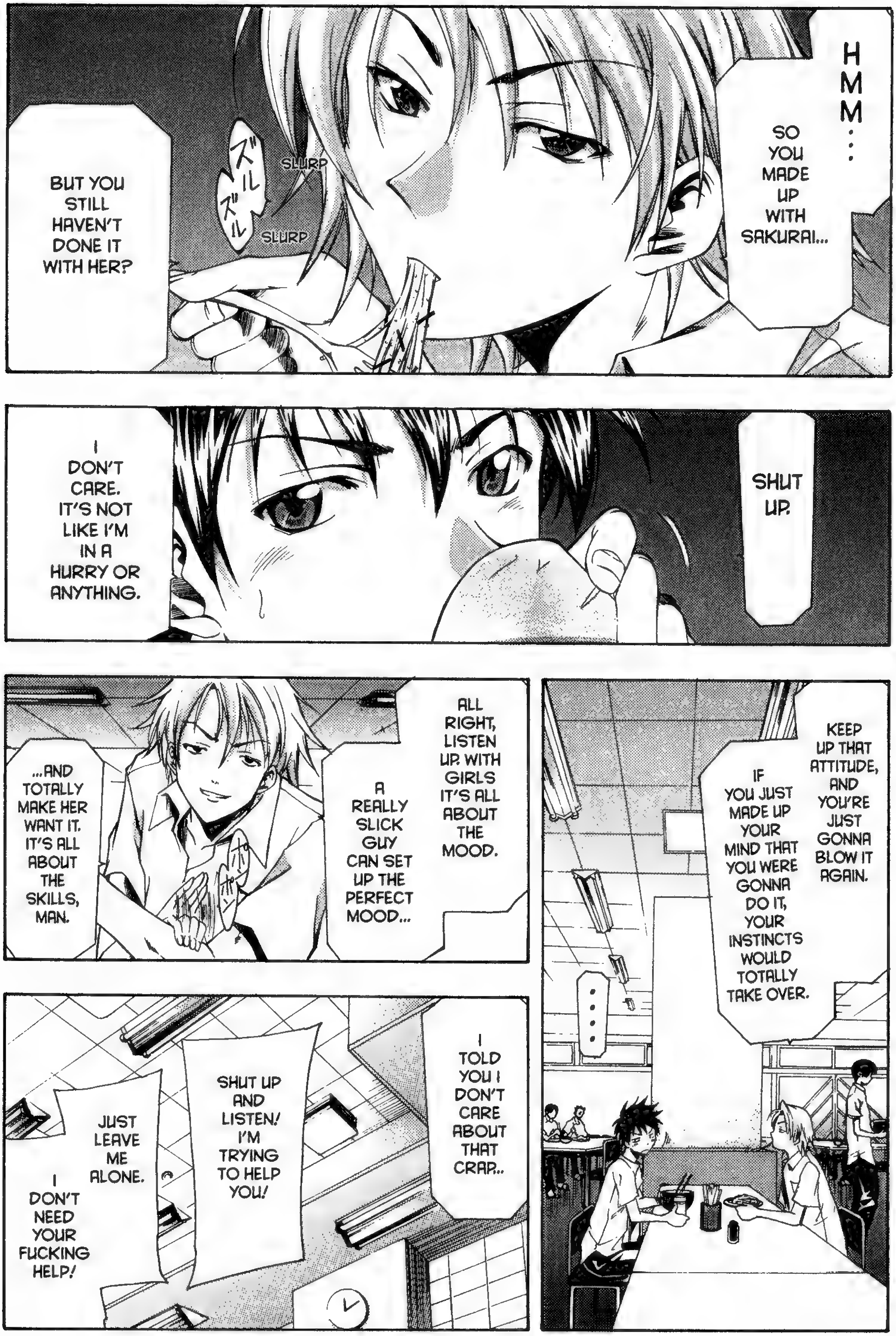
A FORGETFUL LIFE


HEY, SEO-SAN. I WANT YOU TO COME UP WITH SOMETHING REALLY FUNNY FOR THE END OF THE BOOK THIS WEEK.
UH... WELL THEN...
HOW ABOUT SOMETHING LIKE "MY EDITOR WON'T RETURN THE BOOK I LENT HIM, AND...
...I HATE HAVING TO KEEP ASKING FOR IT BACK."
AH! SORRY, I FORGOT ALL ABOUT IT. I'LL BRING IT.
YOU'RE PATHETIC.
AH... DON'T JUST SAY "MY EDITOR"! SAY "MY EDITOR S-KI."
I DON'T WANT PEOPLE TO THINK IT'S ME.
WHAT? JUST PLAIN EDITOR IS FINE.
NO WAY. I DIDN'T EVEN BORROW ANYTHING FROM HIM.
....
ACTUALLY HE DID BORROW SOMETHING... A DVD.

SUZUKA

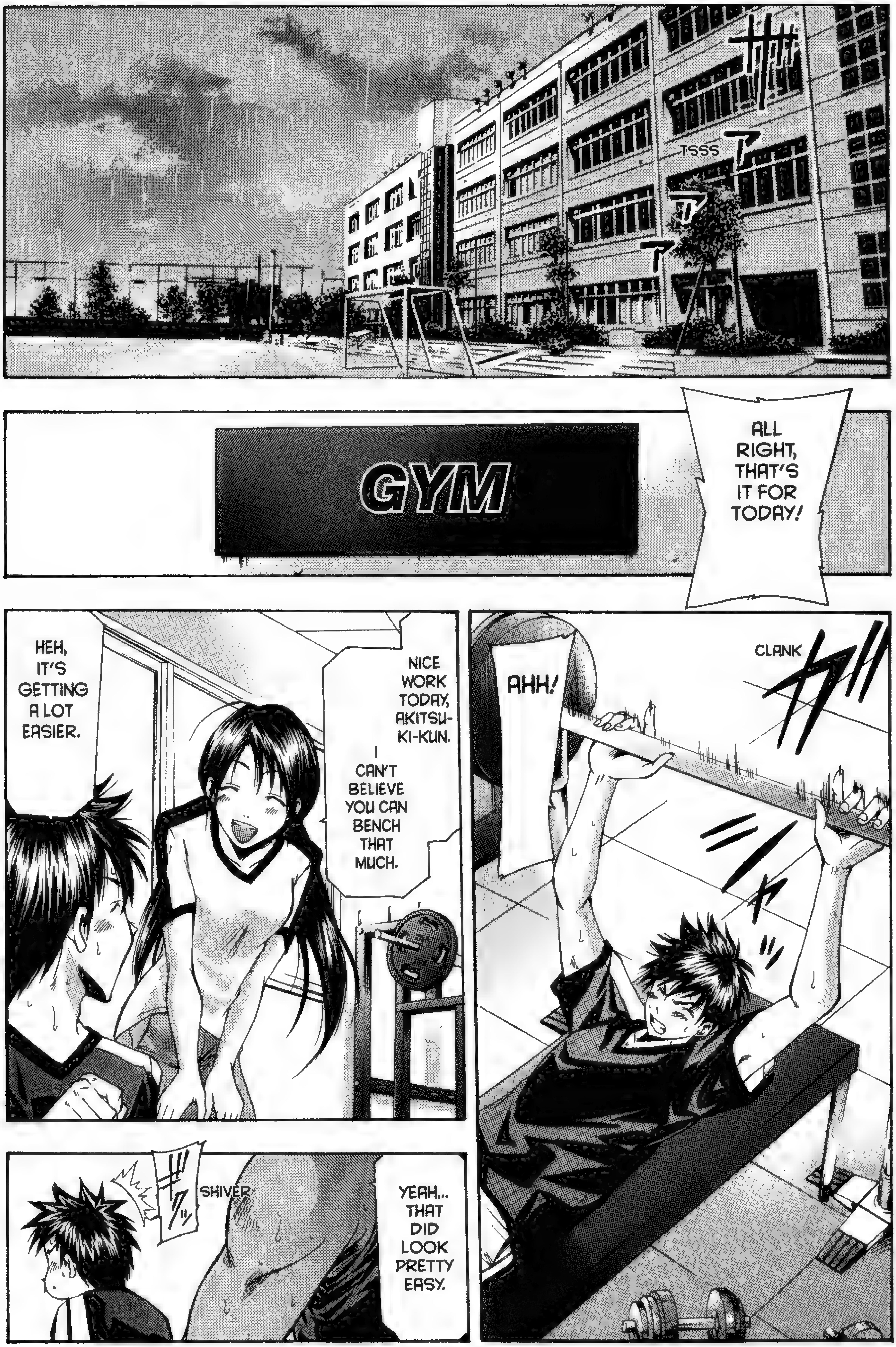
#45

FALL RAIN

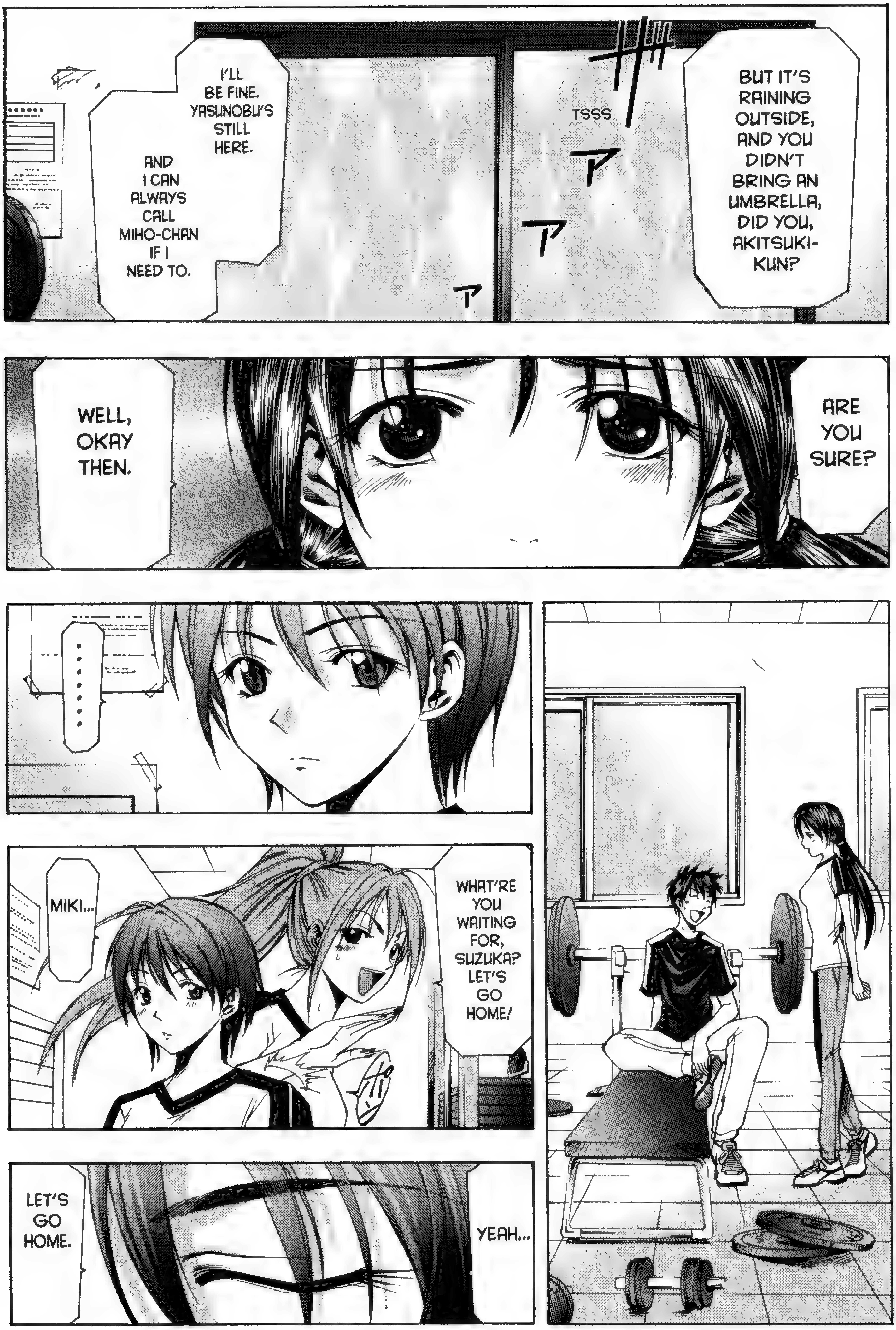

HMM...
SO YOU MADE UP WITH SAKURAI...
ズルズル
SLURP SLURP
BUT YOU STILL HAVEN'T DONE IT WITH HER?
SHUT UP.
I DON'T CARE. IT'S NOT LIKE I'M IN A HURRY OR ANYTHING.
KEEP UP THAT ATTITUDE, AND YOU'RE JUST GONNA BLOW IT AGAIN.
IF YOU JUST MADE UP YOUR MIND THAT YOU WERE GONNA DO IT, YOUR INSTINCTS WOULD TOTALLY TAKE OVER.
....
ALL RIGHT, LISTEN UP. WITH GIRLS IT'S ALL ABOUT THE MOOD.
A REALLY SLICK GUY CAN SET UP THE PERFECT MOOD...
...AND TOTALLY MAKE HER WANT IT. IT'S ALL ABOUT THE SKILLS, MAN.
ポンポン
I TOLD YOU I DON'T CARE ABOUT THAT CRAP..
SHUT UP AND LISTEN! I'M TRYING TO HELP YOU!
JUST LEAVE ME ALONE.
I DON'T NEED YOUR FUCKING HELP!

ALL YOU GUYS DO IS ARGUE.
HUH?
WHAT'RE YOU TALKING ABOUT? CAN I JOIN IN?
YEAH, MAYBE YOU CAN MAKE HIM UNDERSTAND, HASHIBA.
HUH? UNDERSTAND WHAT?
HE WANTED TO SCREW SAKURAI, SO HE JUMPED HER, BUT—
WAAHHH! SHUT UP, YOU IDIOT!
FLIPPA
FLAPPA
HUH?

YOU'RE A CHICK... WHEN YOU'RE GETTING READY TO DO IT, IT'S ALL ABOUT THE MOOD, RIGHT?
LIKE SOMETIMES YOU HAVE TO SWITCH THINGS UP, RIGHT... DO IT IN A NEW LOCATION OR SOMETHING.
ガシャ CLANK
ガシャ CLANK
....
ガシャ CLANK
ガシャ CLANK
PERVERT!
PERVERT!
WHACK
WAH, QUIT IT, YOU IDIOT!
WHACK
WHAT THE HELL WOULD A PERVERT LIKE YOU KNOW ABOUT SETTING THE MOOD?
グイ YANK
I CAN SET THE MOOD JUST FINE AS LONG AS YOU'RE NOT INVOLVED.
WHAT THE HELL DID HE EXPECT?
LET'S MOVE OVER THERE, AKITSUKI! I DON'T WANT HIS STUPIDITY RUBBING OFF ON US.
グイ YANK
......
THIS CONVERSATION ISN'T OVER, YAMATO!
グイ
GOD...
JUST LEAVE ME ALONE.
グイ YANK

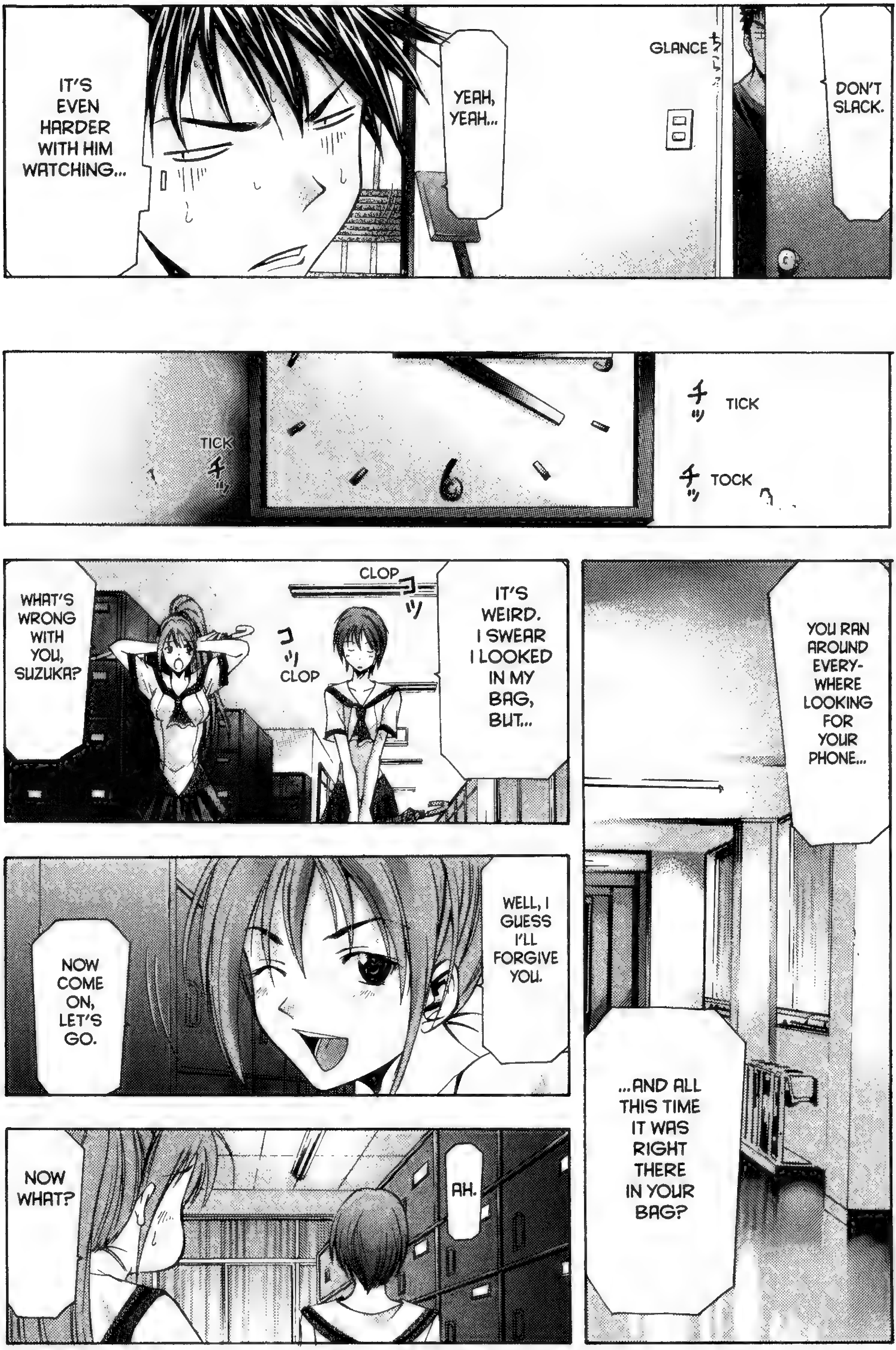

ザァァァ
TSSS
GYM
ALL RIGHT, THAT'S IT FOR TODAY!
AHH!
CLANK
NICE WORK TODAY, AKITSUKI-KUN.
I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU CAN BENCH THAT MUCH.
HEH, IT'S GETTING A LOT EASIER.
YEAH... THAT DID LOOK PRETTY EASY.
ゾクッ
SHIVER

WELL, IF YOU'RE GONNA BE A SHORT DISTANCE RUNNER, WE'RE GONNA HAVE TO BUILD UP THESE MUSCLES A LITTLE MORE.
もみ SQUEEZE
もみ SQUEEZE
HE'S BACK AGAIN? DIDN'T HE GRADUATE?
OKAY! THREE MORE SETS FOR YOU.
WHAT? NO WAY! WHY AM I THE ONLY ONE WHO HAS TO—
HUH?
WHAT WAS THAT?
SLAP
SLAP
SCRUNCH
SCRUNCH
GYAAAA, OKAY, I'LL DO IT! I'LL DO IT!
DON'T EVEN THINK ABOUT SLACKING OFF.
I'LL BE SPYING ON YOU.
UH...
THEN WHY DON'T YOU JUST STAY HERE?
UH, AKITSUKI-KUN... I HAVE PLANS, SO I CAN'T REALLY WAIT FOR—
AH, THAT'S OKAY. DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT. GO AHEAD.


BUT IT'S RAINING OUTSIDE, AND YOU DIDN'T BRING AN UMBRELLA, DID YOU, AKITSUKI-KUN?
TSSS
ア
ア
ア
I'LL BE FINE. YASUNOBU'S STILL HERE.
AND I CAN ALWAYS CALL MIHO-CHAN IF I NEED TO.
ARE YOU SURE?
WELL, OKAY THEN.
......
WHAT'RE YOU WAITING FOR, SUZUKA? LET'S GO HOME!
MIKI...
YEAH...
LET'S GO HOME.

HEY, SUZUKA.
SINCE WE FINISHED EARLY TODAY, WE SHOULD GO TO A CAFÉ OR SOMETHING.
IT'S CHESTNUT SEASON, SO THEY'LL HAVE ALL KINDS OF TASTY CAKES.
WANNA GET SOME?
I'LL PASS.
AH...
I THINK I LEFT MY CELL PHONE BACK IN CLASS.

I'M GONNA RUN AND GET IT.
AH, YOU CAN JUST HEAD HOME, MIKI.
HUH?
THAT'S OKAY, I'LL WAIT FOR YOU.
EATING ALONE IS NO FUN!
ザァ
TSSS
I TOLD YOU, I DON'T WANT ANY CAKE!
COME ON, THEY'RE ONLY IN SEASON FOR A LITTLE WHILE.
HURRMPH.
ブル
SHIVER
ブル
SHIVER
ブル
SHIVER
ブル
SHIVER
ガシャッ
CLUNK
HAHH!
ALL RIGHT, JUST TWO MORE SETS TO GO.


DON'T SLACK.
GLANCE ちら
YEAH, YEAH...
IT'S EVEN HARDER WITH HIM WATCHING...
チッ TICK
チッ TOCK
TICK チッ
YOU RAN AROUND EVERY-WHERE LOOKING FOR YOUR PHONE...
...AND ALL THIS TIME IT WAS RIGHT THERE IN YOUR BAG?
IT'S WEIRD. I SWEAR I LOOKED IN MY BAG, BUT...
CLOP コツ
コツ CLOP
WHAT'S WRONG WITH YOU, SUZUKA?
WELL, I GUESS I'LL FORGIVE YOU.
NOW COME ON, LET'S GO.
AH.
NOW WHAT?

I'VE GOT A REPORT DUE TODAY.
I TOTALLY FORGOT ABOUT IT.
A REPORT? I DIDN'T KNOW WE HAD A–
YEAH, IT'S JUST MY CLASS.
IT'S NOT FINISHED, SO I'LL HAVE TO STAY HERE, AND GET IT DONE.
WHAT?
FORGET ABOUT IT. LET'S JUST GO–
NO, I DON'T WANNA GET IN TROUBLE.
I CAN STILL GET IT IN ON TIME.
....
OKAY... GUESS I'LL JUST SPEND THE REST OF THE DAY ALL BY MYSELF.

PHEW, ALL DONE!
HUH?
YOU GUYS ARE STILL HERE?
WHAT'RE YOU DOING?
OH, I WAS JUST HEADING HOME.
OH YEAH... IT'S RAINING, ISN'T IT?
YASUNOBU'S PROBABLY HOME ALREADY.
GUESS I'LL HAVE TO CALL MIHO-CHAN.
パカッ
FWICK
AH...

HEY...
YAMATO-KUN...
HUH?
JUST...
...TAKE MINE...
....
WHAT?
UM...

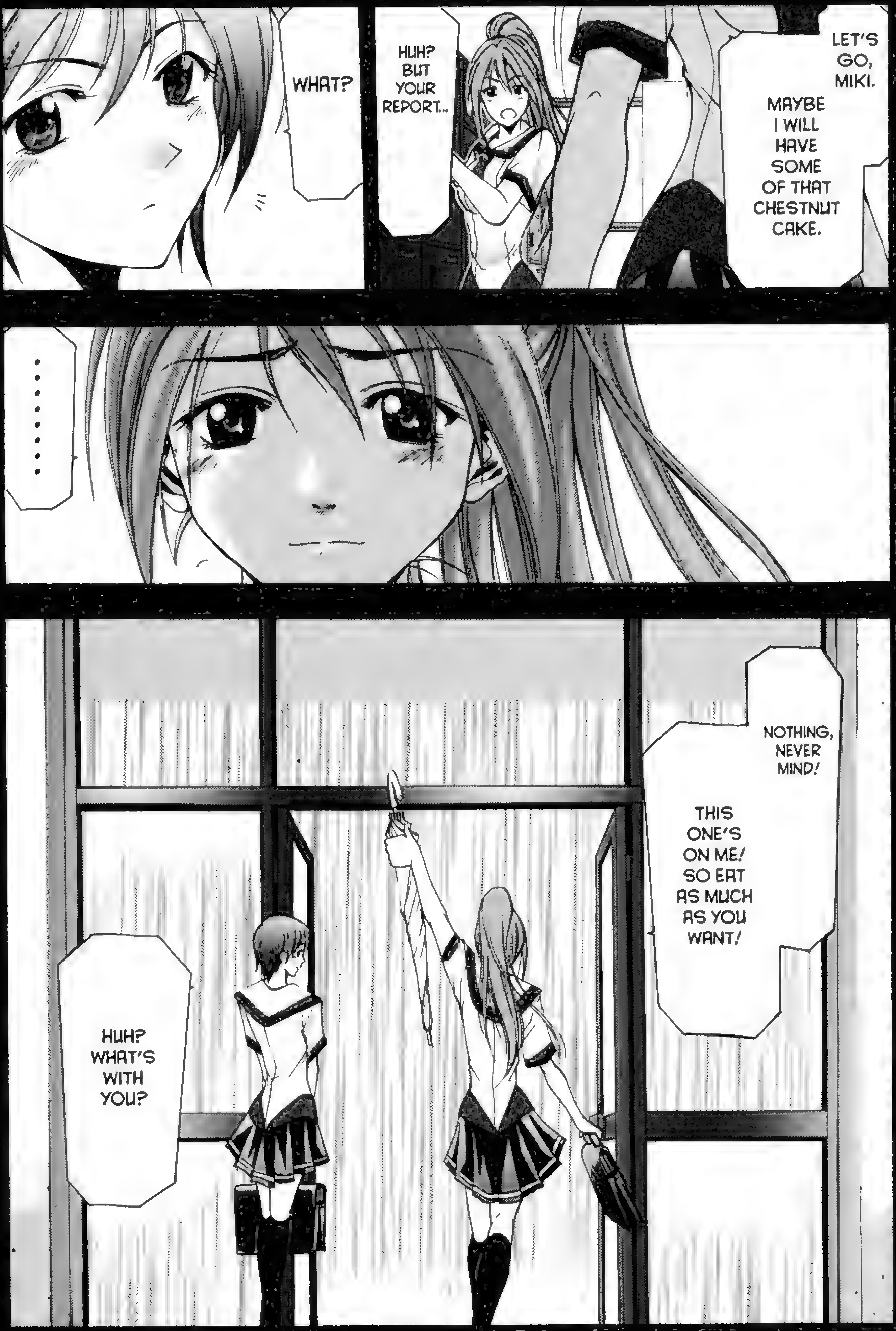
YOU CAN BORROW IT.
UH... BUT...
WHAT'RE YOU GONNA-?
I'LL BE OKAY. ME AND MIKI ARE GOING SOMEWHERE, SO...
I'LL JUST SHARE HERS.
HUH?
O-OKAY.

THANKS... GUESS I'LL TAKE IT THEN.
OKAY.
WHOOSH
....
HEY, SUZUKA...
ARE YOU...

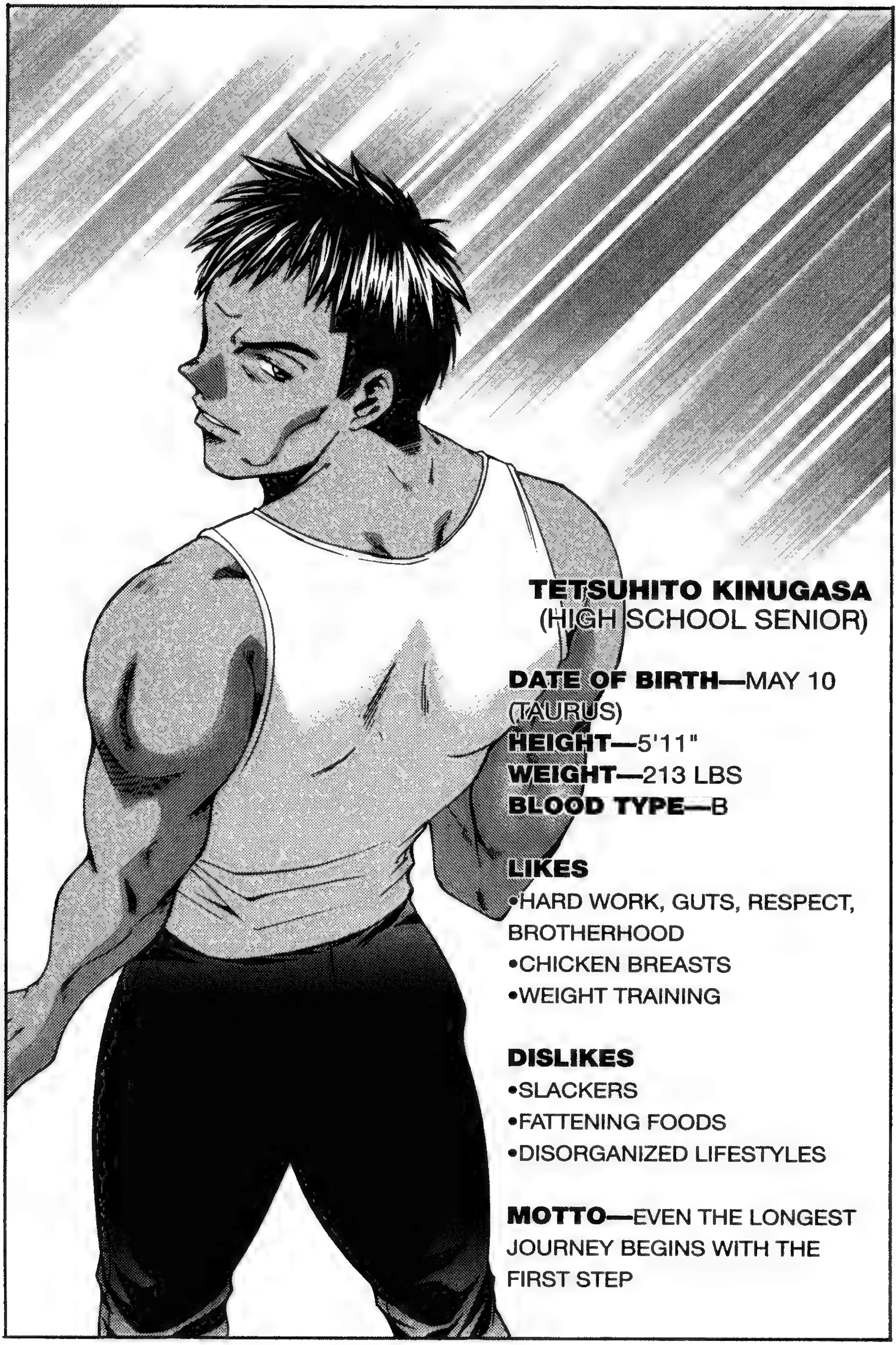
...IN LOVE...
...WITH AKITSUKI?

WHY WOULD YOU SAY THAT?
BECAUSE...
YOU'VE BEEN ACTING WEIRD EVER SINCE YOU CAME BACK FROM AKITSUKI'S PARENT'S HOUSE.
....
AND JUST NOW...IT SEEMED LIKE YOU WERE WAITING AROUND SO YOU COULD GO HOME WITH HIM.
I WAS NOT...
HUH?

I DON'T
...HAVE ANY FEELINGS FOR YAMATO-KUN WHATSOEVER!
OH... WELL, OKAY THEN.
....
トン


LET'S GO, MIKI.
MAYBE I WILL HAVE SOME OF THAT CHESTNUT CAKE.
HUH? BUT YOUR REPORT...
WHAT?
......
NOTHING, NEVER MIND!
THIS ONE'S ON ME! SO EAT AS MUCH AS YOU WANT!
HUH? WHAT'S WITH YOU?

CHARACTER PROFILE NO. 13



TETSUHITO KINUGASA
(HIGH SCHOOL SENIOR)

DATE OF BIRTH—MAY 10 (TAURUS)
HEIGHT—5'11"
WEIGHT—213 LBS
BLOOD TYPE—B

LIKES

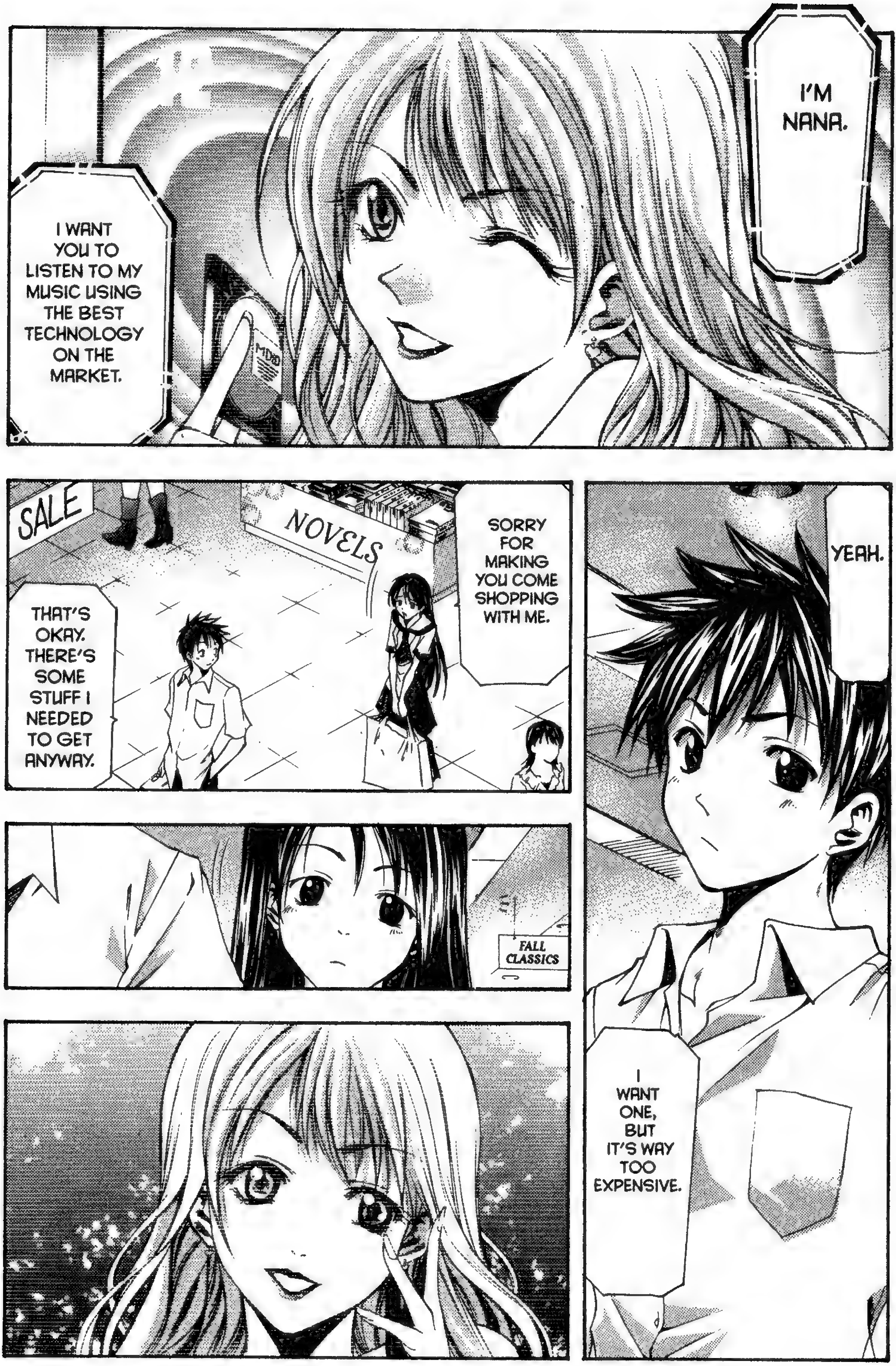
- HARD WORK, GUTS, RESPECT, BROTHERHOOD
- CHICKEN BREASTS
- WEIGHT TRAINING

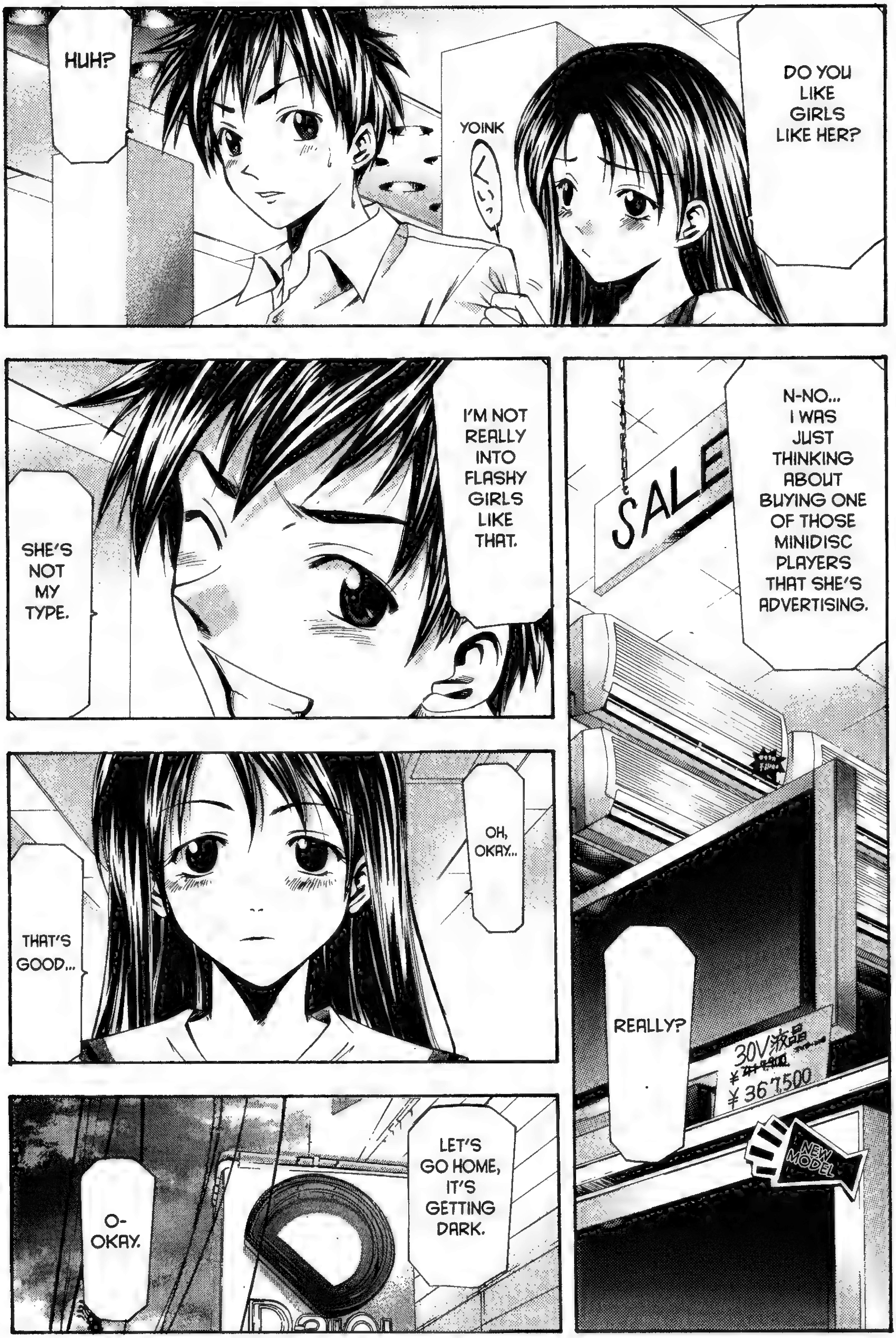
DISLIKES

- SLACKERS
- FATTENING FOODS
- DISORGANIZED LIFESTYLES

MOTTO—EVEN THE LONGEST JOURNEY BEGINS WITH THE FIRST STEP

#46
SHIRAKAWA
SUZUKA


I'M NANA.
I WANT YOU TO LISTEN TO MY MUSIC USING THE BEST TECHNOLOGY ON THE MARKET.
MD
YEAH.
I WANT ONE, BUT IT'S WAY TOO EXPENSIVE.
SORRY FOR MAKING YOU COME SHOPPING WITH ME.
NOVELS
SALE
THAT'S OKAY. THERE'S SOME STUFF I NEEDED TO GET ANYWAY.
FALL CLASSICS


DO YOU LIKE GIRLS LIKE HER?
YOINK
くいっ
HUH?
SALE
N-NO... I WAS JUST THINKING ABOUT BUYING ONE OF THOSE MINIDISC PLAYERS THAT SHE'S ADVERTISING.
REALLY?
30V液晶
¥367,500
NEW MODEL
I'M NOT REALLY INTO FLASHY GIRLS LIKE THAT.
SHE'S NOT MY TYPE.
OH, OKAY...
THAT'S GOOD...
LET'S GO HOME, IT'S GETTING DARK.
O-OKAY.

ALL RIGHT, THAT'S IT FOR TODAY.
MAKE SURE YOU COOL DOWN BEFORE YOU GO HOME.
YES, SIR!
HEY, AKITSUKI-KUN. SINCE YOU FINISHED SO EARLY, WE SHOULD GO GET SOMETHING TO EAT.
HUH? YEAH, SURE.
TH-THOSE TWO SURE SEEM TO BE GETTING ALONG WELL LATELY.
HUH?
OF COURSE THEY ARE. THEY'RE GOING OUT.
WHA-?
YOU DIDN'T KNOW?
......
ガ
BLUSH
SERIOUSLY?
TRACK SCHOLARSHIP STUDENT WHO'S BEEN TURNED DOWN BY EVERY GIRL – KENJI KOBAYAKAWA-KUN

COME ON, LET'S GO HOME, SUZUKA!
HUH? OH... YEAH.
AH, WANNA GO DO KARAOKE?
MAYBE THEY'LL HAVE NANA'S NEW SONG!
WHO'S NANA?
DON'T YOU KNOW NANA? SHE'S TOTALLY HUGE RIGHT NOW.
I-I'D PROBABLY KNOW HER IF I HEARD HER...

RESTAURANT CASA
HELLO.
ソワ JIGGLE
ソワ JIGGLE
パタン FWIP
....?
YOU OKAY, HONOKA-CHAN?
YOU SEEM A LITTLE RESTLESS.
HUH? I DO?
YEAH... YOU KEEP JIGGLING AROUND.

WELL, ACTUALLY...
I'VE GOT THIS FRIEND FROM JUNIOR HIGH WHO REALLY WANTS TO MEET YOU.
HUH? ME?
I TEXTED HER, AND TOLD HER YOU FINISHED PRACTICE EARLY, AND SHE SAID SHE'D COME BY.
OH, SO THAT'S WHY YOU SEEM SO NERVOUS.
I'M SORRY, I KNOW IT'S NOT FAIR OF ME TO SPRING THIS ON YOU.
NO, IT'S NO BIG DEAL.
BUT I'M NOT REALLY DRESSED UP OR ANYTHING.
AH, THERE SHE IS!
AH!
HUH?

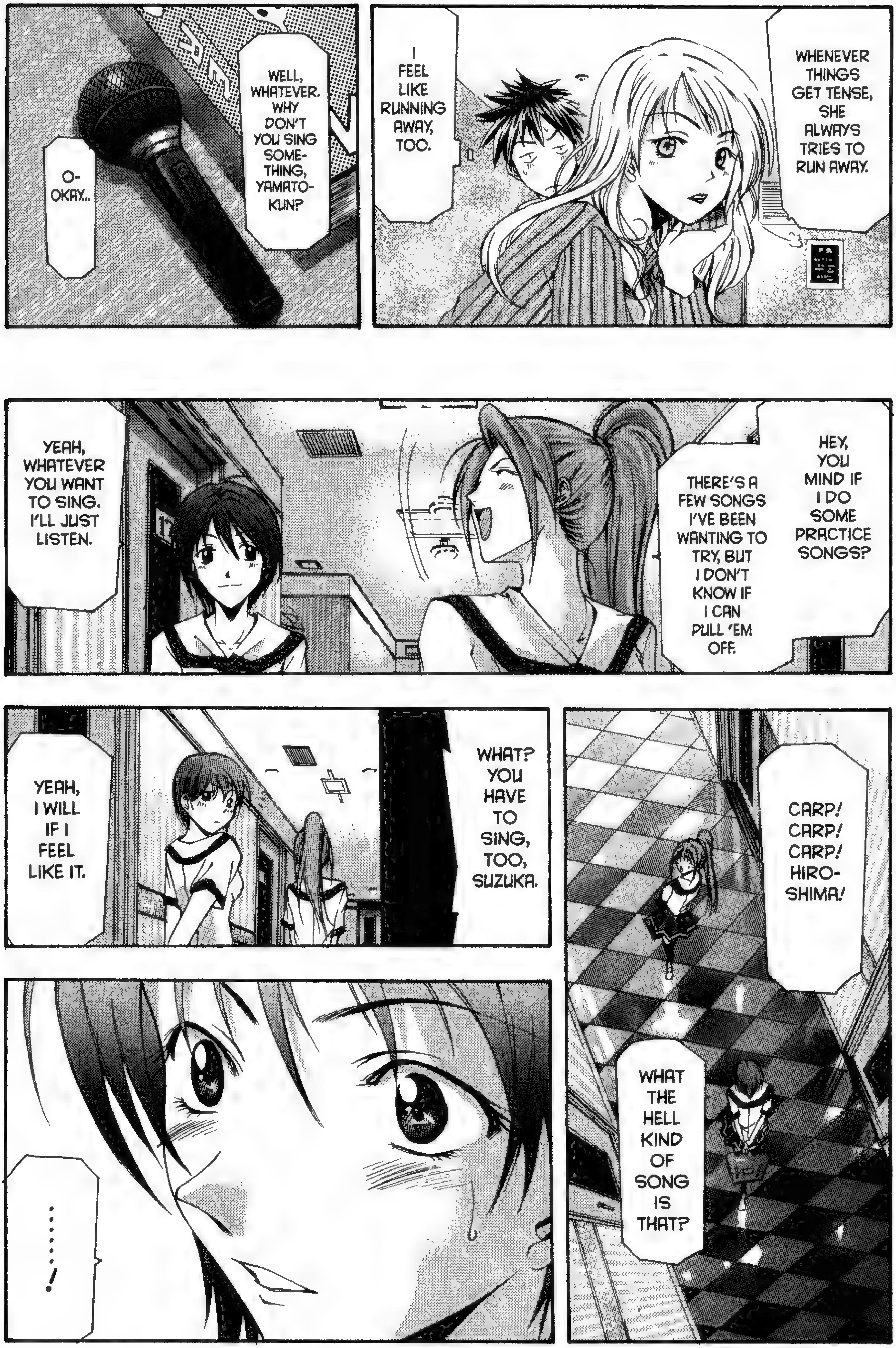
SORRY I'M LATE!
I HAD TO SNEAK OUT OF WORK.
HUH?
WH- WHA—?
SHOULDN'T YOU BE WEARING A DISGUISE OR SOMETHING, NANA-CHAN?
FORGET THAT. IT'S TOO MUCH OF A PAIN.
......
SO THAT'S YOUR BOYFRIEND, HONOKA?
YOU'RE FRIENDS WITH...

AH! SORRY. I'M NANA SHIRAKAWA.
NICE TO MEET YOU!
I WANT YOU TO LISTEN TO MY MUSIC USING THE BEST TECHNOLOGY ON THE MARKET.
....
N-NICE TO MEET YOU!
I-I'M A FAN!
UH...I WATCH ALL YOUR TV DRAMAS.
......
I'VE NEVER BEEN ON A TV DRAMA.
SORRY, I GUESS THIS IS A LITTLE TOO SHOCKING FOR YOU.
UH.... YEAH, WELL...
WE CAN'T REALLY RELAX AND TALK HERE. LET'S GO DO KARAOKE.
AH... BUT AKITSUKI-KUN HAS TO...
N-NO, I DON'T MIND GOING.
KARAOKE
BIG-WAKABA
3F
カ

WOW.
SO YOU GUYS WERE FRIENDS ALL THROUGH JUNIOR HIGH?
Y-YEAH.
THAT'S RIGHT. WE'RE BEST FRIENDS.
GRAND MENU
I WAS JUST STARTING TO GET POPULAR IN JUNIOR HIGH...
AND MOST OF THE KIDS AT SCHOOL WOULDN'T EVEN TALK TO ME.
WOW, I GUESS LIFE AS A CELEBRITY IS PRETTY TOUGH.
YEAH, SO AFTER A WHILE, I JUST DIDN'T EVEN WANNA GO TO SCHOOL ANYMORE.
CLINK コトッ
ONE DAY I DITCHED, BOUGHT A PACK OF SMOKES AND JUST HID OUT IN THIS SHRINE.
THEN THIS GIRL WORKING AT THE SHRINE CAME UP TO ME.
HEY, YOU SHOULDN'T SMOKE!
HUH? LEAVE ME ALONE.
YOU'RE WEARING MY SCHOOL'S UNIFORM.
WHAT'S YOUR NAME?

HUH? YOU DON'T KNOW ME?
THAT'S WHY I'M ASKING.
AT THAT MOMENT, I FELT A LITTLE BLOW TO MY PRIDE, BUT...
WH- WHAT'S WITH THAT GETUP? YOU INTO COSPLAY OR SOMETHING?
HUH? IT'S NOT COSPLAY. HOW RUDE.
WOULD YOU JUST PUT THAT CIGARETTE OUT?
NO!
IT WAS THE FIRST TIME THAT ANYBODY HAD EVER TREATED ME LIKE A NORMAL PERSON.
AND THE NEXT THING I KNEW, WE WERE FRIENDS.
I-IS THAT HOW YOU SAW IT?
SO, AS HONOKA'S FRIEND, I CAME HERE TODAY TO TELL HER BOYFRIEND SOMETHING VERY IMPORTANT.
ME?
HONOKA HAS ZERO EXPERIENCE WITH GUYS, AND SHE DOESN'T KNOW THE FIRST THING ABOUT DATING.
SHUT UP, NANA-CHAN!

SO DON'T TRY AND JUMP HER LIKE YOU DID THE OTHER DAY...
YOU HAVE TO BE A LITTLE MORE GENTLE WITH HER!
UH....
カァァ
BLUSH
UM...
TH-THAT'S ENOUGH, NANA-CHAN!
NO, HONOKA! YOU HAVE TO MAKE THESE THINGS CLEAR OR...
ガタ
FWUMP
GEEZ!
YOU DON'T HAVE TO TELL HIM THAT!
AH... WHERE'RE YOU GOING, HONOKA?
バタン
SLAM
THE BATH-ROOM!


WHENEVER THINGS GET TENSE, SHE ALWAYS TRIES TO RUN AWAY.
I FEEL LIKE RUNNING AWAY, TOO.
WELL, WHATEVER. WHY DON'T YOU SING SOMETHING, YAMATO-KUN?
O-OKAY...
HEY, YOU MIND IF I DO SOME PRACTICE SONGS?
THERE'S A FEW SONGS I'VE BEEN WANTING TO TRY, BUT I DON'T KNOW IF I CAN PULL 'EM OFF.
YEAH, WHATEVER YOU WANT TO SING. I'LL JUST LISTEN.
WHAT? YOU HAVE TO SING, TOO, SUZUKA.
YEAH, I WILL IF I FEEL LIKE IT.
CARP! CARP! CARP! HIROSHIMA!
WHAT THE HELL KIND OF SONG IS THAT?
......!

カァァァ
GRR

WHAT THE HELL DO YOU THINK YOU'RE DOING?
SLAM
?
AH...
ASAHINA?
WHO'S THAT?
SHE A FRIEND OF YOURS, YAMATO-KUN?
YOU ARE SUCH A JERK!
YOU'VE ONLY BEEN GOING OUT WITH HONOKA-CHAN FOR ONE MONTH, AND YOU'RE ALREADY CHEATING ON HER?
WHAT?
NO!
WHAT DO YOU MEAN 'NO'?

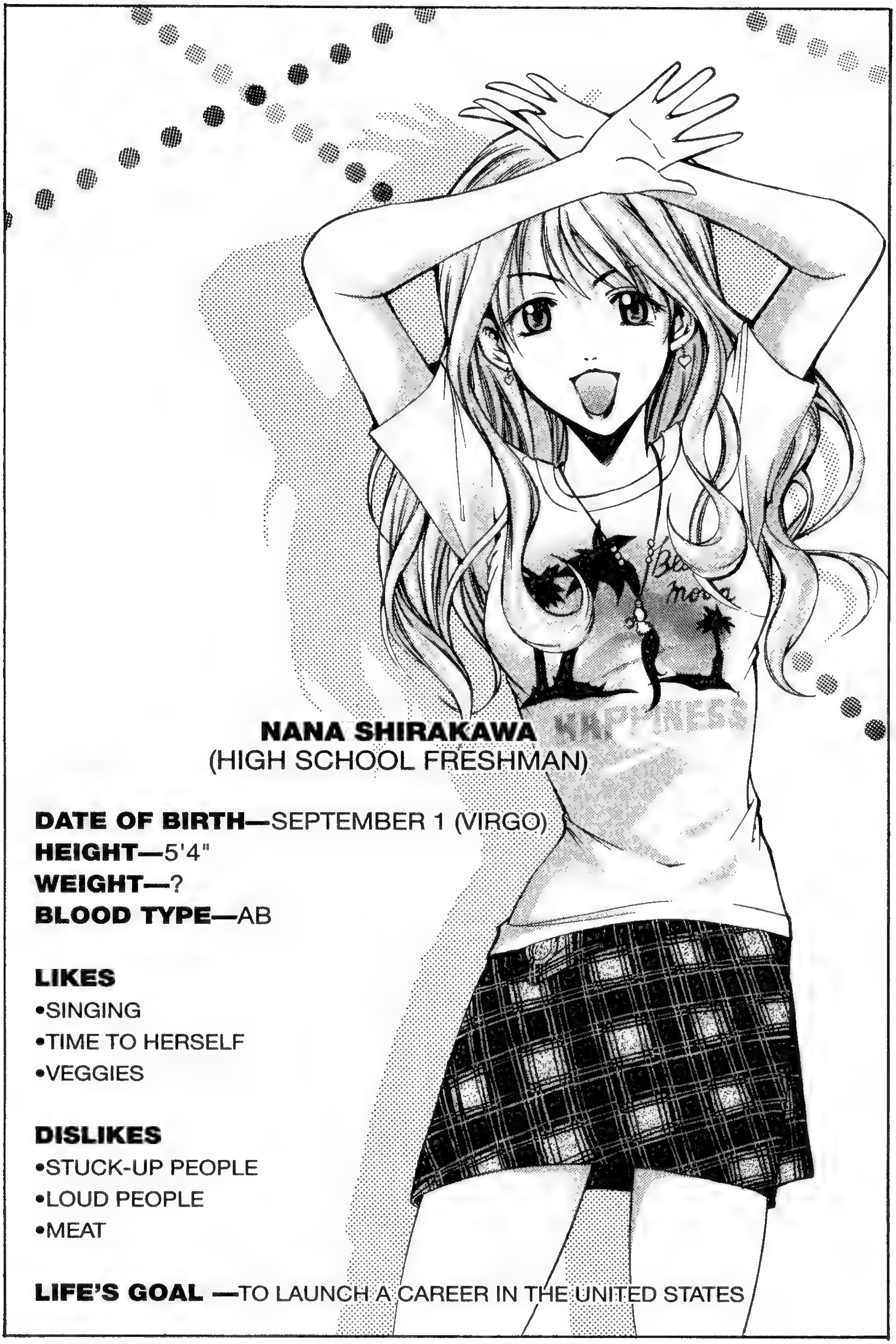
WHAT'RE YOU DOING, SUZUKA?
WHAT AM I DOING?
HUH?
WHA--? NANA SHIRAKAWA?
HUH?
H-HELLO.
WHAT THE HELL IS GOING ON?
WHAT'RE YOU DOING SINGING WITH NANA?
I-I WAS JUST...
WHAT'S THE DEAL, YAMATO-KUN? ARE THESE YOUR GIRLFRIENDS, TOO?
YANK
NO!

THEN WHO THE HELL ARE THEY?
THEY'RE JUST MY—
ARE YOU GOING OUT WITH NANA, AKITSUKI-KUN?
SHUT UP.
ギャー GYAA
......
ギャー GYAA
WH- WHAT'S GOING ON?
ドキ THUMP
ドキ THUMP
ドキ THUMP
CLINK カラン
OH, THEY'RE JUST YOUR FRIENDS FROM THE TRACK TEAM?
I THOUGHT—
THAT'S WHAT I WAS TRYING TO TELL YOU.
I WAS PRETTY SHOCKED TO FIND OUT THAT YOU WERE FRIENDS WITH NANA SHIRAKAWA, HONOKA-CHAN.
Y- YOU WERE?

STEP
コツン
SORRY!
ぼそ MUMBLE
TH- THAT'S OKAY.
UM... NANA-CHAN...
HUH? OH YEAH!
AS LONG AS WE'VE GOT ALL YOUR TRACK BUDDIES HERE, WE SHOULD ALL DO KARAOKE TOGETHER!
HUH? DON'T YOU HAVE TO GET BACK TO WORK?
REALLY? YOU SURE YOU DON'T MIND?
OKAY, I'LL GO TELL THE FRONT DESK.
SIT DOWN, YOU GUYS.

I'VE GOTTA MAKE ROOM FOR MIKI, SO I'M GONNA SCOOT NEXT TO YOU A LITTLE, OKAY?
O-OKAY...
......
WHY DON'T YOU SCOOT OVER THIS WAY A LITTLE, AKITSUKI-KUN?
HUH? OKAY...
HMM...
I SEE WHAT'S GOING ON...

CHARACTER PROFILE NO. 14



NANA SHIRAKAWA
(HIGH SCHOOL FRESHMAN)

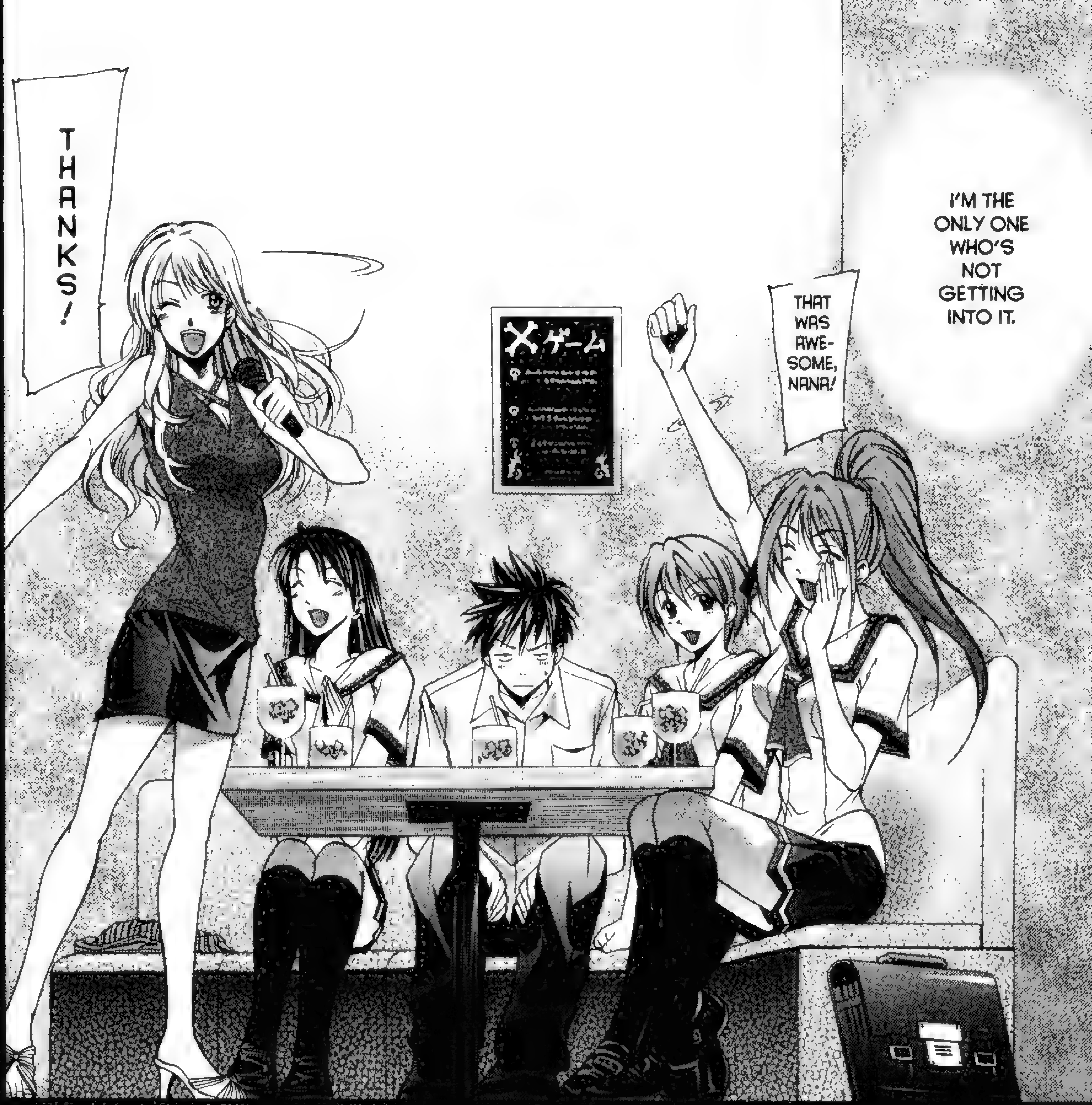
DATE OF BIRTH—SEPTEMBER 1 (VIRGO)
HEIGHT—5'4"
WEIGHT—?
BLOOD TYPE—AB

LIKES
- SINGING
- TIME TO HERSELF
- VEGGIES

DISLIKES
- STUCK-UP PEOPLE
- LOUD PEOPLE
- MEAT

LIFE'S GOAL —TO LAUNCH A CAREER IN THE UNITED STATES

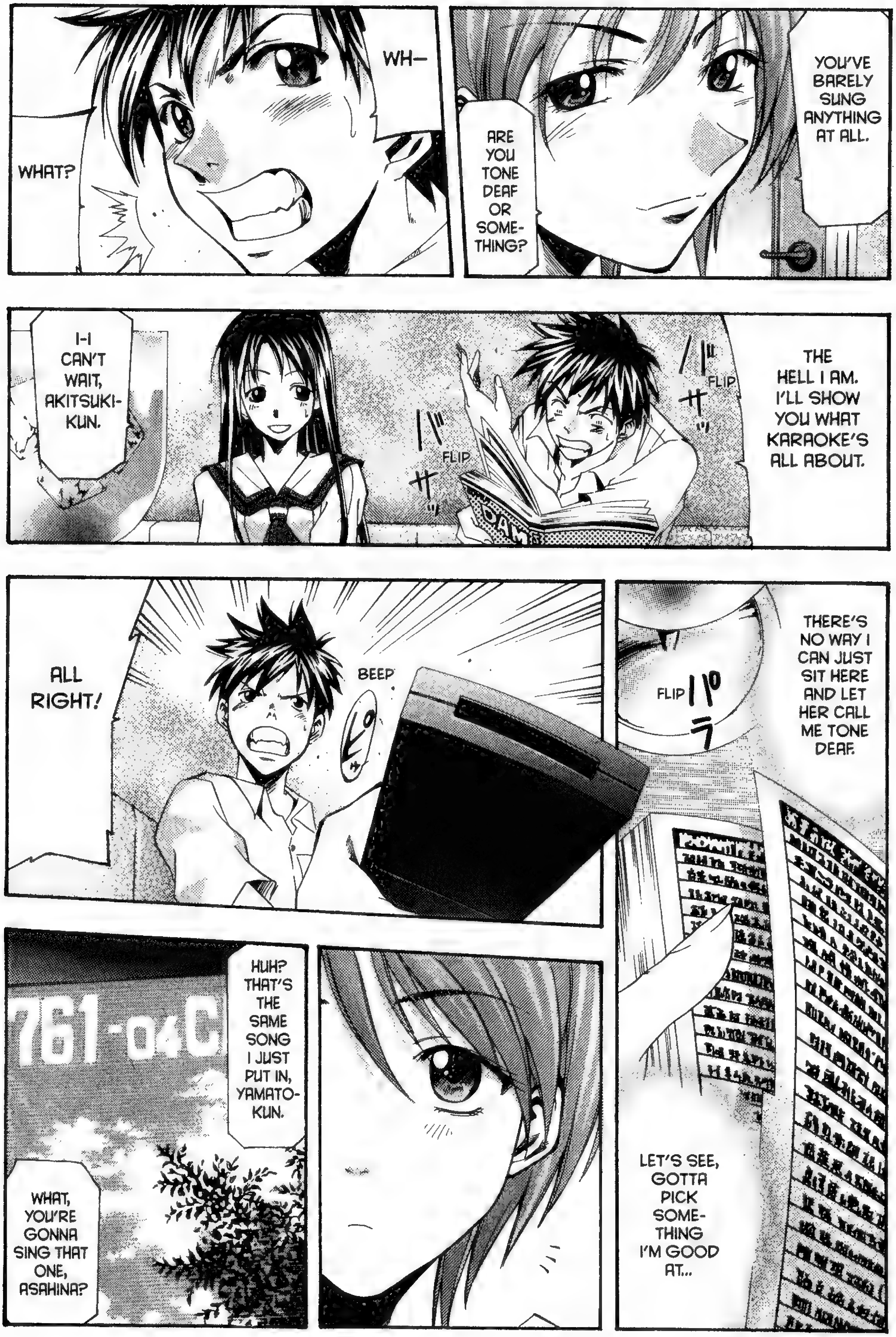
NEXT I'D LIKE TO SING A NEW SONG!
ALL RIGHT! SING IT, NANA!
I CAN'T BELIEVE WE HAVE THE ACTUAL ARTIST HERE SINGING HER OWN SONGS.
GO, NANA-CHAN!
......

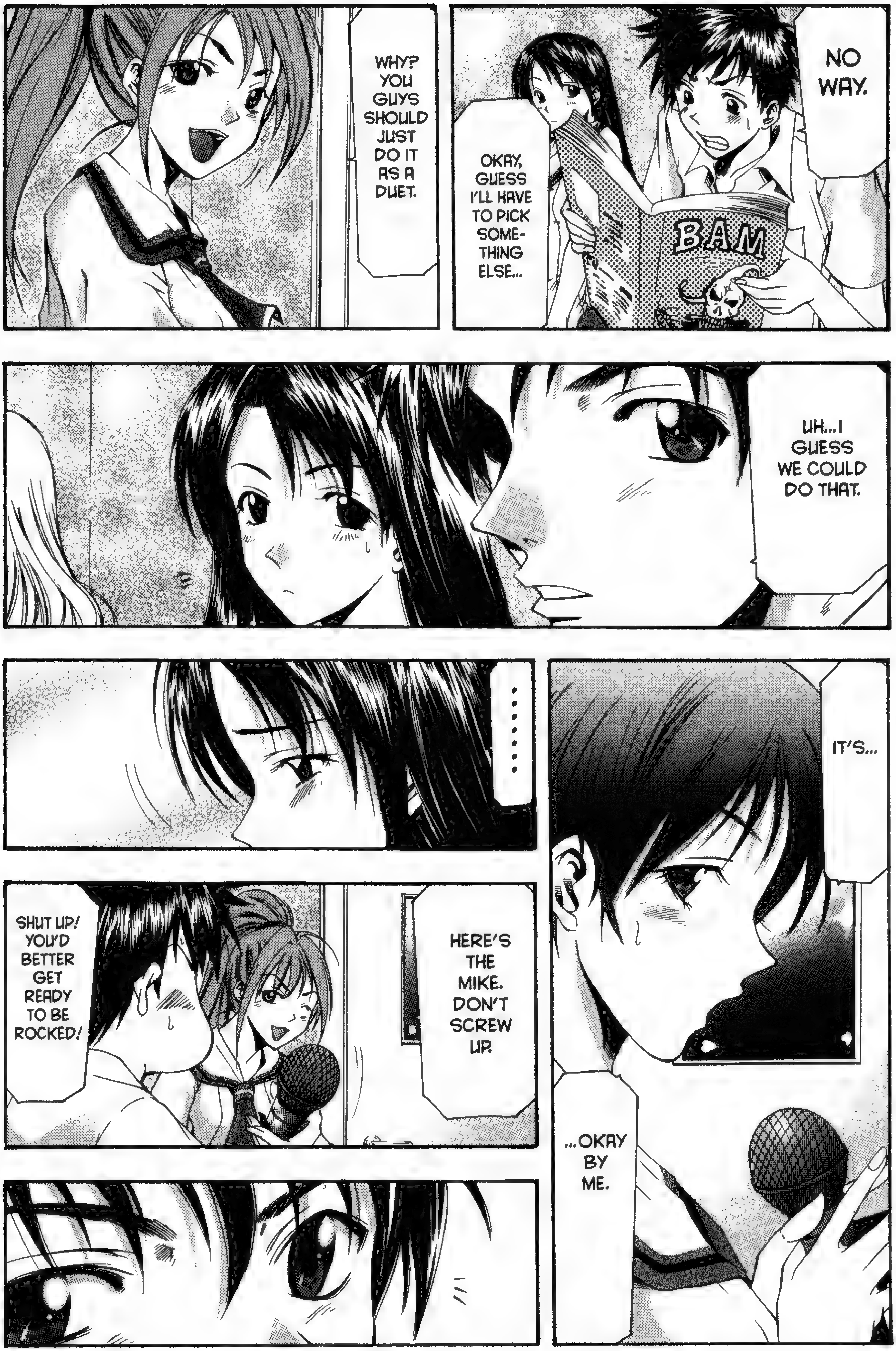

I'M THE ONLY ONE WHO'S NOT GETTING INTO IT.
THAT WAS AWESOME, NANA!
✕ゲーム
THANKS!

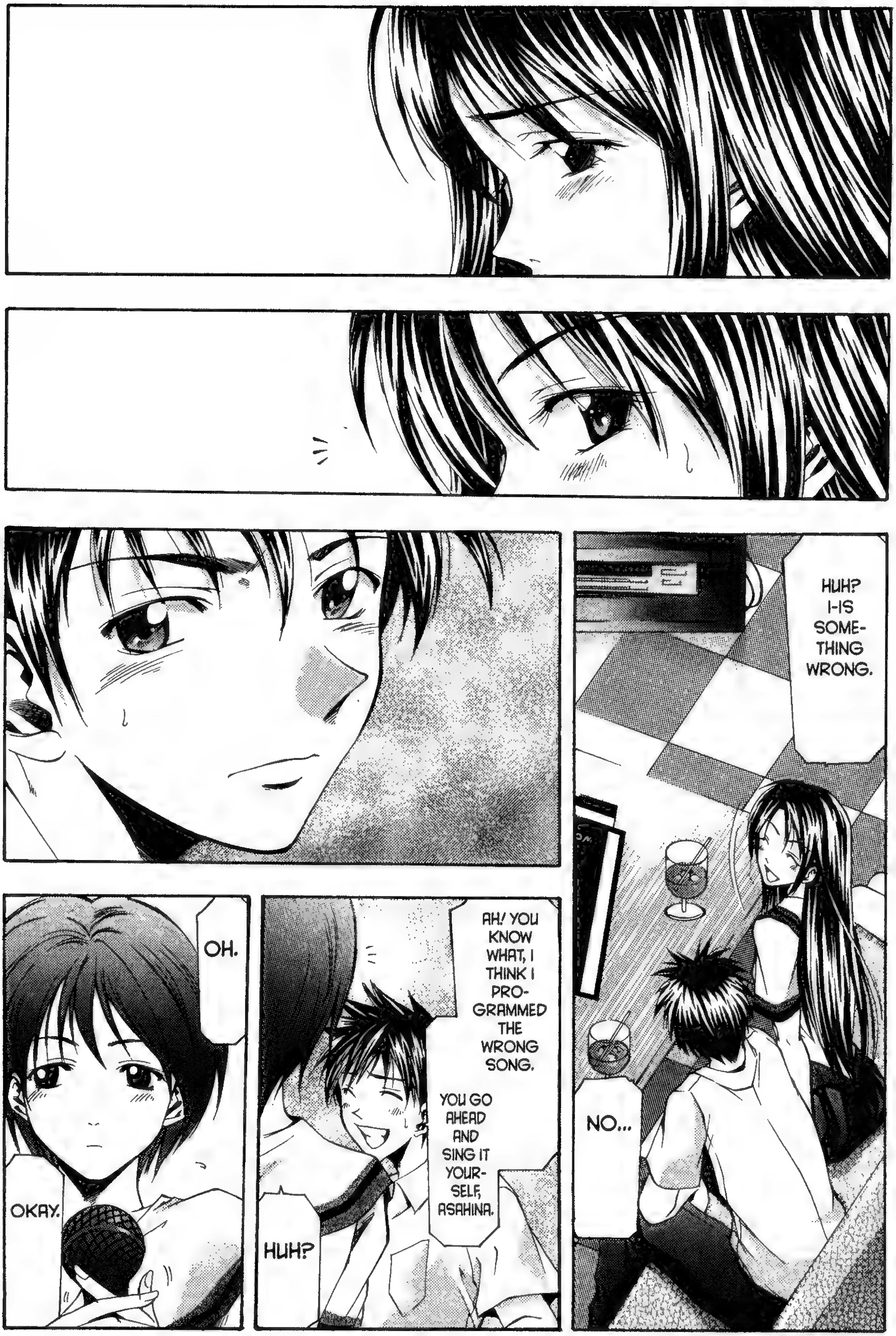
SUZUKA

#47
BOYFRIEND

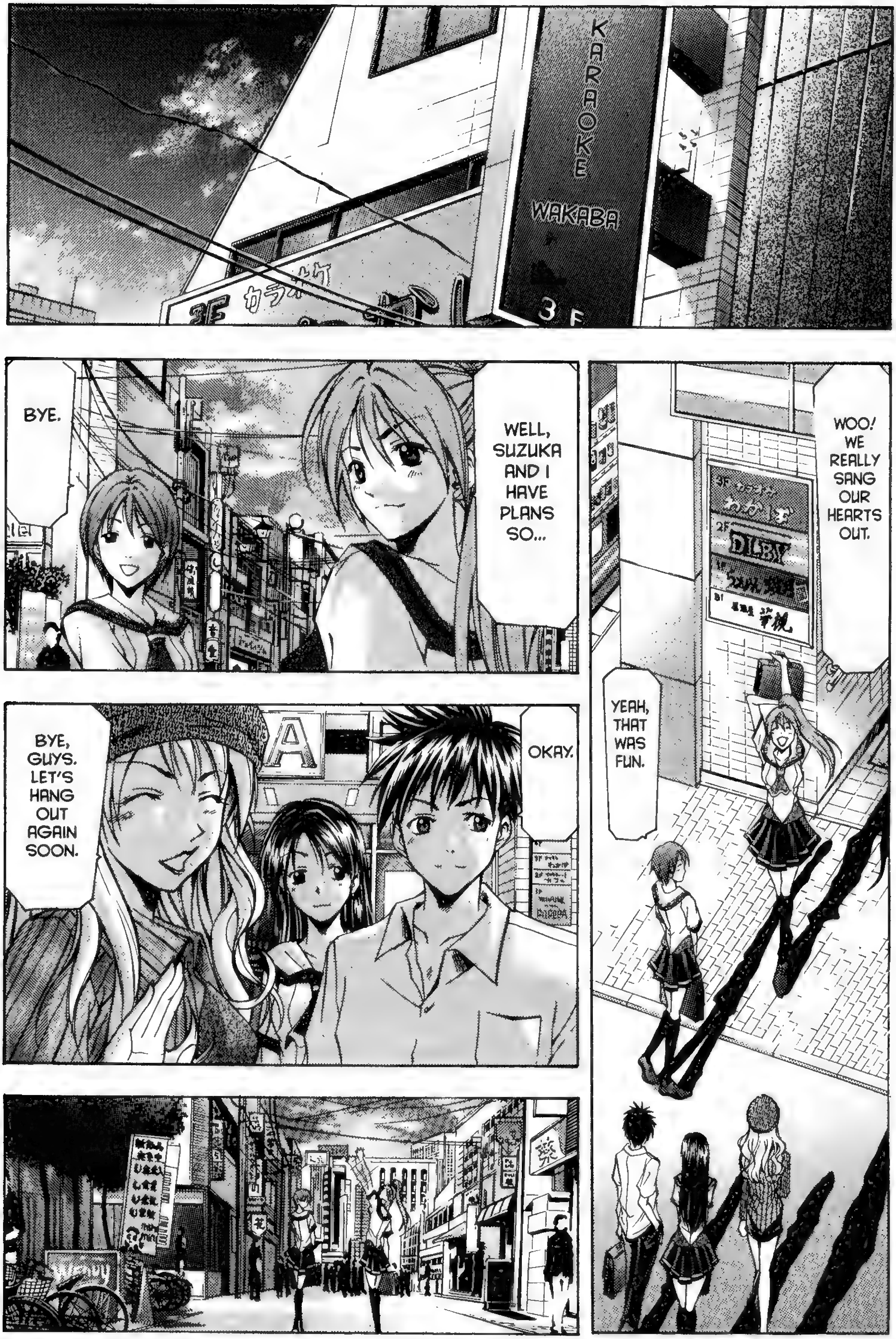
COME ON, SUZUKA! YOU SING ONE!
HUH? OKAY.
BAM
WHAT'S WRONG? YOU'RE NOT HAVING FUN? WHY DON'T YOU SING SOMETHING?
Y-YEAH, IN A MINUTE.
AH!
WAIT, CAN YOU ONLY SING BASEBALL SONGS? IS THAT IT?
HUH?


YOU'VE BARELY SUNG ANYTHING AT ALL.
ARE YOU TONE DEAF OR SOMETHING?
WH—
WHAT?
THE HELL I AM. I'LL SHOW YOU WHAT KARAOKE'S ALL ABOUT.
バサッ FLIP
バサッ FLIP
I-I CAN'T WAIT, AKITSUKI-KUN.
THERE'S NO WAY I CAN JUST SIT HERE AND LET HER CALL ME TONE DEAF.
パラ FLIP
LET'S SEE, GOTTA PICK SOMETHING I'M GOOD AT...
ピッ BEEP
ALL RIGHT!
HUH? THAT'S THE SAME SONG I JUST PUT IN, YAMATO-KUN.
761-04C
WHAT, YOU'RE GONNA SING THAT ONE, ASAHINA?


NO WAY.
OKAY, GUESS I'LL HAVE TO PICK SOMETHING ELSE...
BAM
WHY? YOU GUYS SHOULD JUST DO IT AS A DUET.
UH...I GUESS WE COULD DO THAT.
IT'S...
......
...OKAY BY ME.
HERE'S THE MIKE. DON'T SCREW UP.
SHUT UP! YOU'D BETTER GET READY TO BE ROCKED!


HUH? I-IS SOMETHING WRONG.
NO...
AH! YOU KNOW WHAT, I THINK I PROGRAMMED THE WRONG SONG.
YOU GO AHEAD AND SING IT YOURSELF, ASAHINA.
HUH?
OH.
OKAY.

S-SORRY.
I GUESS I PUT IN THE WRONG NUMBER.
UH... UM...
AKITSUKI-KUN...
SWIP
....
THAT'S RIGHT...
I SWORE THAT I WOULD NEVER HURT HONOKA-CHAN AGAIN.

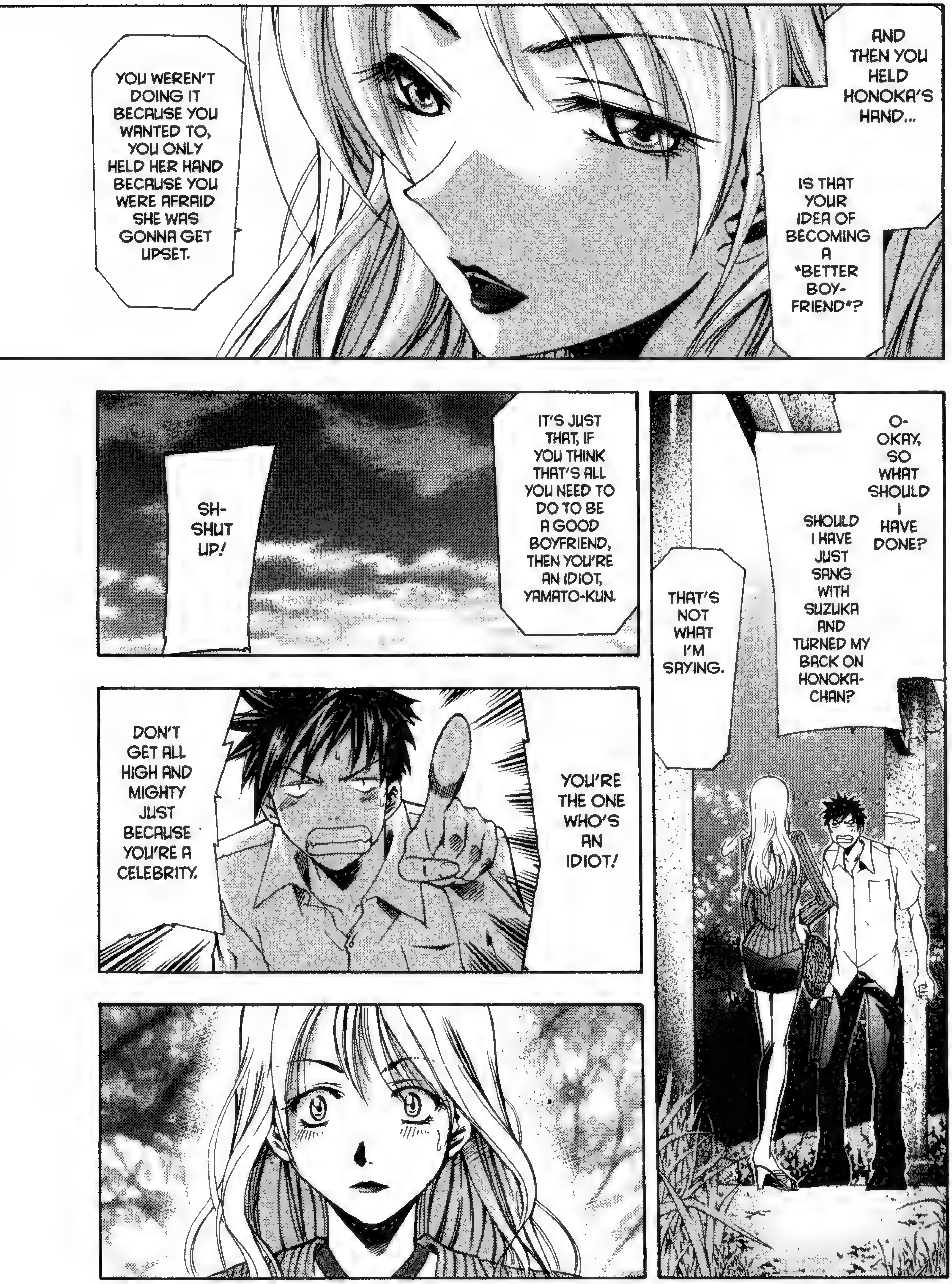

KARAOKE
WAKABA
3F
3F カラオケ
WOO! WE REALLY SANG OUR HEARTS OUT.
YEAH, THAT WAS FUN.
WELL, SUZUKA AND I HAVE PLANS SO...
BYE.
OKAY.
BYE, GUYS. LET'S HANG OUT AGAIN SOON.

WELL... I GUESS WE SHOULD HEAD BACK HOME.
UM, WHAT DO YOU WANNA DO, NANA-CHAN?
WELL...
AS LONG AS I'M HERE, I GUESS I'LL WALK YOU HOME, HONOKA-CHAN.
I'VE GOTTA KEEP AN EYE ON YAMATO-KUN FOR YOU... MAKE SURE HE DOESN'T TRY ANYTHING WEIRD AGAIN!
I- I WON'T!
THANKS FOR WALKING ME HOME, NANA-CHAN.
NO PROBLEM.
I'D BEEN WANTING TO VISIT THE SHRINE WHERE YOU FIRST YELLED AT ME ANYWAY.
WHAT-EVER.

WELL, I'M GONNA CALL A CAB AND HAVE THEM COME PICK ME UP.
OKAY.
I'LL CALL YOU.
HAVE A NICE WALK HOME, AKITSUKI-KUN.
YEAH, THANKS.
BYE, HONOKA.
STEP
STEP
YOU'RE SUCH A GOOD BOYFRIEND, YAMATO-KUN.
HUH?
I WAS WATCHING YOU ALL DAY...
YOU'RE SO NICE.... HONOKA CAN REALLY COUNT ON YOU.

I THINK SHE'S REALLY HAPPY TO HAVE FOUND A BOYFRIEND LIKE YOU, YAMATO-KUN.
FWUP
I-I'M THE ONE WHO'S HAPPY.
HONOKA-CHAN IS A GREAT COOK... AND SHE'S REALLY CUTE, AND...
SHE'S WAY TOO GOOD FOR ME.
HYUUU
SO, I ALWAYS FEEL LIKE I HAVE TO TRY A LITTLE HARDER...
...THAT I HAVE TO BECOME A BETTER BOY-FRIEND...
...SO THAT I NEVER HURT HONOKA-CHAN AGAIN.

……
ARE YOU A COMPLETE IDIOT?
……
HUH?
COME ON. A BOYFRIEND THAT WILL NEVER HURT HONOKA?
WH-WHAT THE HELL?
A SECOND AGO YOU WERE TALKING ABOUT HOW NICE I WAS. YOU'RE CRAZY.
DO YOU EVEN KNOW WHAT YOU'RE SAYING?
WHEN WE WERE DOING KARAOKE... YOU DECIDED NOT TO SING WITH SUZUKA-CHAN BECAUSE YOU WERE AFRAID YOU'D HURT HONOKA'S FEELINGS... RIGHT?
Y-YEAH...


AND THEN YOU HELD HONOKA'S HAND...
IS THAT YOUR IDEA OF BECOMING A "BETTER BOYFRIEND"?
YOU WEREN'T DOING IT BECAUSE YOU WANTED TO, YOU ONLY HELD HER HAND BECAUSE YOU WERE AFRAID SHE WAS GONNA GET UPSET.
O-OKAY, SO WHAT SHOULD I HAVE DONE?
SHOULD I HAVE JUST SANG WITH SUZUKA AND TURNED MY BACK ON HONOKA-CHAN?
THAT'S NOT WHAT I'M SAYING.
IT'S JUST THAT, IF YOU THINK THAT'S ALL YOU NEED TO DO TO BE A GOOD BOYFRIEND, THEN YOU'RE AN IDIOT, YAMATO-KUN.
SH-SHUT UP!
YOU'RE THE ONE WHO'S AN IDIOT!
DON'T GET ALL HIGH AND MIGHTY JUST BECAUSE YOU'RE A CELEBRITY.

YOU HIDE BEHIND ALL THIS BULLSHIT AND THEN WHEN SOMEONE CALLS YOU ON IT, YOU THROW A TANTRUM.
YOU'RE JUST LIKE A LITTLE KID, YAMATO-KUN.
……?
WHY DON'T YOU JUST BE YOURSELF IN FRONT OF HONOKA?
QUIT TRYING TO PULL OFF THAT IDIOTIC "PERFECT BOYFRIEND" CRAP. IT'S ALL JUST AN ACT!
I-IT'S NOT AN ACT!
I'M JUST BEING MYSELF!
OH, IS THAT RIGHT?
WELL, IT SURE SEEMS LIKE YOU'RE TRYING AWFULLY HARD TO ME.
I AM NOT.

DO YOU EVEN KNOW WHAT KIND OF STUFF HONOKA LIKES, OR WHAT HER HOBBIES ARE...
OR HOW ABOUT HER BIRTHDAY? WHAT DAY IS IT?
UH...
TSSS
ア
ア
....
SEE?
ARE YOU REALLY IN LOVE WITH HONOKA?
I GUESS I DON'T...
...REALLY KNOW THAT MUCH ABOUT HER.
YOU HAVEN'T EVEN BEEN PAYING ATTENTION TO HER.
YOU'RE TOO BUSY TRYING TO PULL OFF YOUR WHOLE "PERFECT BOYFRIEND" ACT, SO THAT YOU'LL FEEL LIKE YOU'RE DOING THE RIGHT THING.

IF YOU GO INTO A RELATIONSHIP WITHOUT EVEN KNOWING HOW YOU FEEL ABOUT HER...
THEN OF COURSE YOU'RE GONNA END UP HURTING HONOKA! IT'S JUST A MATTER OF TIME!
NOW THAT I THINK ABOUT IT... I REALLY DON'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT HONOKA-CHAN.
I MEAN... I HAVEN'T EVEN TRIED TO GET TO KNOW HER.

BUT WHY?
I'M SUPPOSED TO BE HER BOYFRIEND...
IT'S SEPTEMBER 16.
HUH?
HONOKA'S BIRTHDAY.
AHH....
YOU'D BETTER HURRY UP AND FIND A PRESENT FOR HER!
LOOK, IT'S NOT LIKE I'M TRYING TO BREAK YOU GUYS UP OR ANYTHING...
JUST, GET YOUR SHIT TOGETHER.
SLAP
OUCH.

I JUST WANT YOU TO QUIT BULLSHITTING, AND START...
...GETTING TO KNOW HONOKA FOR REAL.
THAT'S ALL I WANTED TO SAY.
BYE.
WHOOSH
O-OKAY.
GET TO KNOW...
HYUUU
...HONOKA-CHAN FOR REAL...?

#48

ADVICE

SUZUKA

MIHO! I TOLD YOU NOT TO PUT GORO-CHAN IN THE BATHS, DIDN'T I?
BUT...
GET OVER HERE, GORO-CHAN.
NO, GORO-CHAN! RUN AWAY!
WHOOSH
AH.
MEOW.
SPLASH
PUT HIM OUTSIDE, MIHO! I DON'T WANT HIM SHEDDING IN THE BATHS.
WHAT DOES IT MATTER? WE'RE GONNA DRAIN THEM ANYWAY.

I JUST WANT YOU TO QUIT BULL SHITTING, AND START...
...GETTING TO KNOW HONOKA FOR REAL.
....
MAYBE SHE'S RIGHT...
I'VE BEEN SO BUSY WORRYING ABOUT MYSELF, I HAVEN'T EVEN BEEN PAYING ATTENTION TO HONOKA-CHAN.
HERE I AM TRYING TO BE THE PERFECT BOYFRIEND, AND I DON'T EVEN KNOW MY OWN GIRLFRIEND'S BIRTHDAY.
I'M SUCH AN IDIOT.
IT'S SEPTEMBER 16TH!
HONOKA'S BIRTHDAY!

FWISH
THAT'S IT!
I'M GONNA GO SHOPPING FOR A PRESENT THE DAY AFTER TOMORROW.
I'M GONNA GIVE HER THE BEST BIRTHDAY PRESENT SHE'S EVER GOTTEN...
FROM NOW ON, I REALLY WILL BE THE PERFECT BOYFRIEND.
...SO NANA-CHAN ENDED UP BEING LATE FOR WORK.
THAT'S WHAT SHE GETS FOR CONVINCING US ALL TO DO AN EXTRA TWO HOURS OF KARAOKE.
......
コツ STEP
コツ STEP
I WONDER WHAT KIND OF PRESENT HONOKA-CHAN WOULD LIKE.
OF COURSE I COULD JUST ASK HER, BUT...
WHAT'S WRONG?
N-NOTHING.
I REALLY WANNA SURPRISE HER, SO...

AH...
HEY, AKITSUKI-KUN.
ARE YOU FREE TOMORROW?
HUH? WHY?
WELL, WE DON'T HAVE SCHOOL, SO I THOUGHT MAYBE WE COULD GO SOMEWHERE TOGETHER.
HUH?
OH, UH.... ACTUALLY I HAVE PLANS.
PLANS?
UH, UM...
AH!
YASUNOBU! I MADE PLANS TO HANG OUT WITH YASUNOBU!
O-OH, OKAY THEN.
SORRY, I DIDN'T KNOW YOU HAD PLANS.
NO, IT'S NO BIG DEAL.
SORRY, BUT YOUR BIRTHDAY'S IN TWO DAYS.
I'VE GOTTA GET YOU A PRESENT TOMORROW.

BUT WHAT IN THE HECK WOULD HONOKA-CHAN WANT FOR HER BIRTHDAY?
ROSES!
HUH?
YOU GET HER ONE RED ROSE FOR EVERY YEAR OLD SHE IS. THAT'S THE PERFECT GIFT!
QUIT JOKING AROUND, MAN. I'M SERIOUS ABOUT THIS.
I TOLD YOU, DUDE.
GIRLS ARE BORN ROMANTICS.
NO GIRL CAN RESIST A BOUQUET OF FLOWERS FROM A GUY SHE LIKES.
I'M NOT JOKING!
IT WORKS FOR ME EVERY TIME!
YEAH, SURE... IT WORKS FOR YOU, BUT...

I'D BE TOO EMBARRASSED TO GO INTO A FLOWER SHOP, AND BUY SOMETHING LIKE THAT.
HUH?
OH, I GET IT. SO, YOU'RE MORE CONCERNED ABOUT BEING EMBARRASSED...
CLINK
カラ
CLINK
カラ
...THAN MAKING YOUR GIRLFRIEND HAPPY. IS THAT HOW IT IS?
N-NO...
OH NO, I'M DOING IT AGAIN.
HAVEN'T YOU EVER HEARD THE EXPRESSION...
"A MAN MUST SOMETIMES SACRIFICE HUMILITY FOR THE LOVE OF A WOMAN?"
SLAM
ガン
UH...
BUT...
ROSES...
ROSES?
ALL RIGHT... I'LL KEEP THAT IN MIND.
I'M TELLING YOU, DUDE! IT'LL WORK.
I'LL ASK A FEW OTHER PEOPLE, AND THEN I'LL MAKE UP MY MIND.

ASAHIYU BATHS
A BIRTHDAY PRESENT?
YEAH.
WHAT WOULD YOU WANT, AYANO-SAN?
LET'S SEE...
AS LONG AS I COULD TELL HE PUT A LOT OF THOUGHT INTO IT, I'D BE HAPPY NO MATTER WHAT HE GAVE ME.
UH... CAN YOU BE A LITTLE MORE SPECIFIC?
WHAT? YOU'RE LOOKING FOR A PRESENT FOR SAKURAI-SENPAI?

GET HER A STUFFED ANIMAL, YAMATO-KUN!
A STUFFED ANIMAL?
YEAH! SAKURAI-SENPAI IS REALLY GIRLY, SO...
I BET SHE LOVES TEDDY BEARS!
HMM...
YEAH, I COULD SEE THAT, BUT...IT SEEMS A LITTLE CHILDISH.
GET HER A BULGARI NECKLACE.
ふっ
FUU
ぞわ〜
SHIVER
YUUKA-SAN... WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU DOING?
WHAT? IT SOUNDED LIKE A FUN CONVERSATION, THAT'S ALL.
PLUP
PLUP
HEY! GET AWAY FROM HIM, YOU PERVERT!
LISTEN, YAMATO-KUN. THE PRICE OF THE PRESENT IS THE ONLY TRUE MEASURE OF LOVE.
ANY GUY WHO GIVES HIS GIRLFRIEND A CHEAP-ASS PIECE OF JUNK FOR A BIRTHDAY PRESENT IS A WORTHLESS TOOL.

NOT EVERYONE'S AS SHALLOW AS YOU ARE!
JUST GET AWAY FROM YAMATO-KUN!
OUCH! QUIT SCRATCHING ME, MIHO-CHAN!
SHUT UP, YOU KNOW IT'S TRUE.
I WOULDN'T MIND GETTING A CHEAP PRESENT.
YEAH, YOU WOULDN'T, RIGHT, MEGUMI-SAN?
NO... I DON'T CARE IF IT'S CHEAP.
I JUST WANT A NICE RING FOR MY LEFT HAND... FOR MY RING FINGER... JUST LIKE AYANO-SAN'S.
HUH?
......
RUSTLE
COULD YOU SOUND ANY MORE DESPERATE?
SHOCK
HUH? WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
I'M TELLING YOU, JUST GET HER A TEDDY BEAR!
......
NO WAY! GET HER A BULGARI NECKLACE. OR A HERMÈS BAG... THAT'LL WORK, TOO.

STOP JOKING AROUND, AND HELP ME THINK OF SOMETHING.
GRR
TRY THINKING OF SOMETHING YOURSELF!
I CAN'T THINK OF ANYTHING. THAT'S WHY I'M ASKING YOU.
GOD, YOU REALLY ARE WORTHLESS.
OKAY, FINE. WHY DON'T YOU JUST GET NAKED, AND TIE A RIBBON AROUND YOUR NECK?
THEN JUST SAY, HERE'S YOUR PRESENT.
N-NAKED?
NOW, NOW...
NOW THAT YOU'VE HEARD EVERYONE'S ADVICE, WHY DON'T YOU JUST RELAX AND THINK IT OVER?
OKAY?
O-OKAY.
EVERYONE'S ADVICE, HUH?

SUGGESTIONS 1 & 2
GET A TEDDY BEAR HOLDING A BOUQUET OF ROSES, AND...
SUGGESTIONS 3 & 4
...WEARING A BULGARI NECKLACE AND AN ENGAGEMENT RING.
SUGGESTIONS 5 & 6
AND THEN GET NAKED, TIE A RIBBON AROUND MY NECK, WALK UP TO HONOKA-CHAN...
AND SAY...
HERE'S YOUR PRESENT.
......

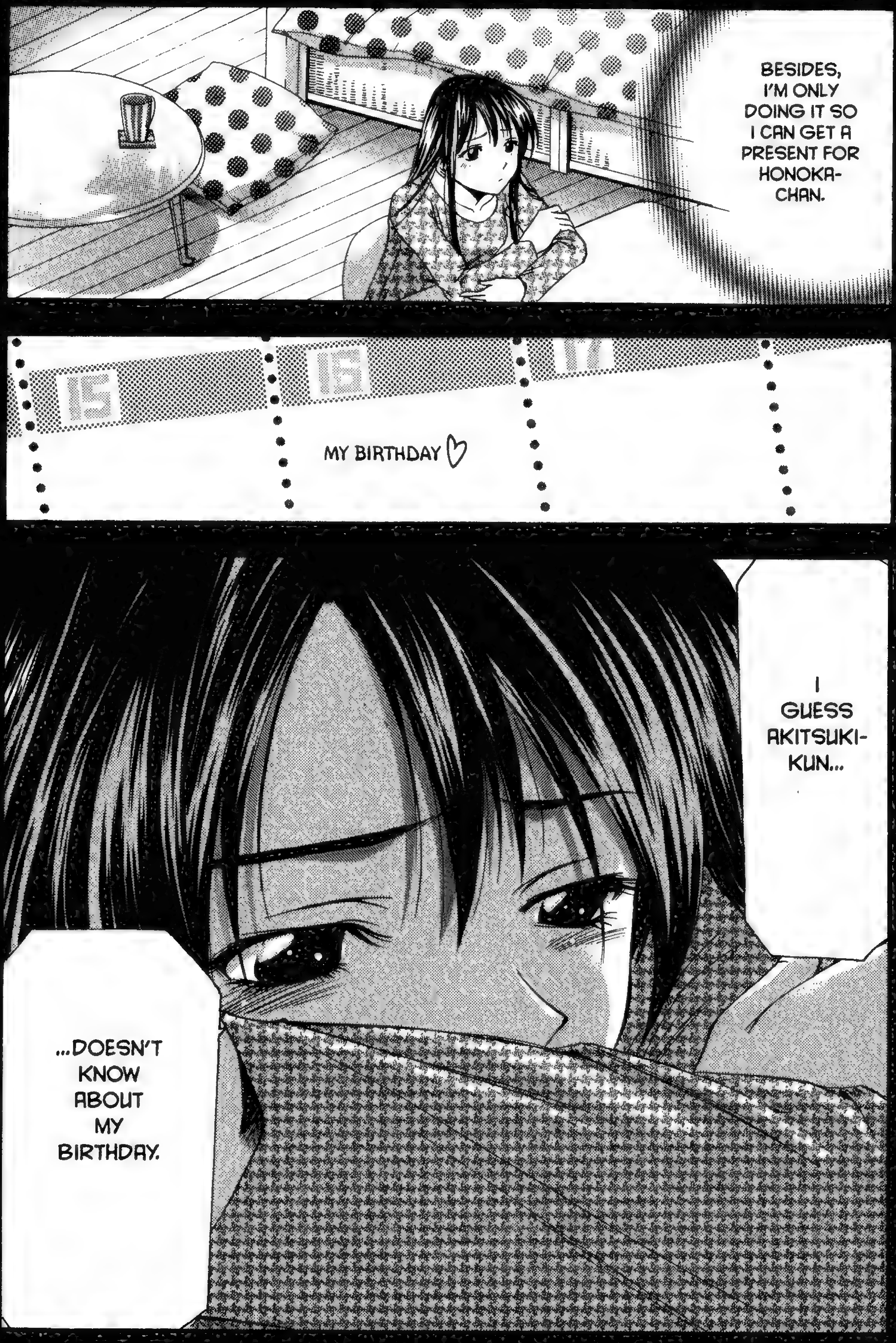
HELL, NO!
DING
チーン
THE OBVIOUS CONCLUSION
……
HE THOUGHT IT OVER ONE MORE TIME.
SLAM
ガーン
NOPE, NO FUCKING WAY!
MAYBE I'LL GO TO THE STORE, AND FLIP THROUGH SOME MAGAZINES. THAT OUGHTA GIVE ME SOME IDEAS.
ASAH
I JUST NEED SOMETHING SIMPLE.
FLIP
パラッ
HMM...
FLIP
パラ
NOTHING REALLY STICKS OUT.
THIS SUCKS.
I CAN'T THINK OF ANY-THING.
10

AH!
YOU'RE READING A PORNO MAG!
SLAM
!!
A-
!?
AH, ASAHINA! NO, I WAS—
HUH?
HOT HAIRSTYLES FOR GIRLS
Cawaee!
ISN'T THAT A GIRLS' MAGAZINE?
EEW, I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU'RE INTO THAT STUFF
SHUT UP, I'M JUST TRYING TO FIGURE OUT WHAT TO GET HONOKA-CHAN.
HUH?
OH...
HER BIRTHDAY IS IN TWO DAYS.
AH, WHAT DO YOU THINK SHE'D WANT, ASAHINA?
I DON'T KNOW. A NECKLACE OR SOMETHING?

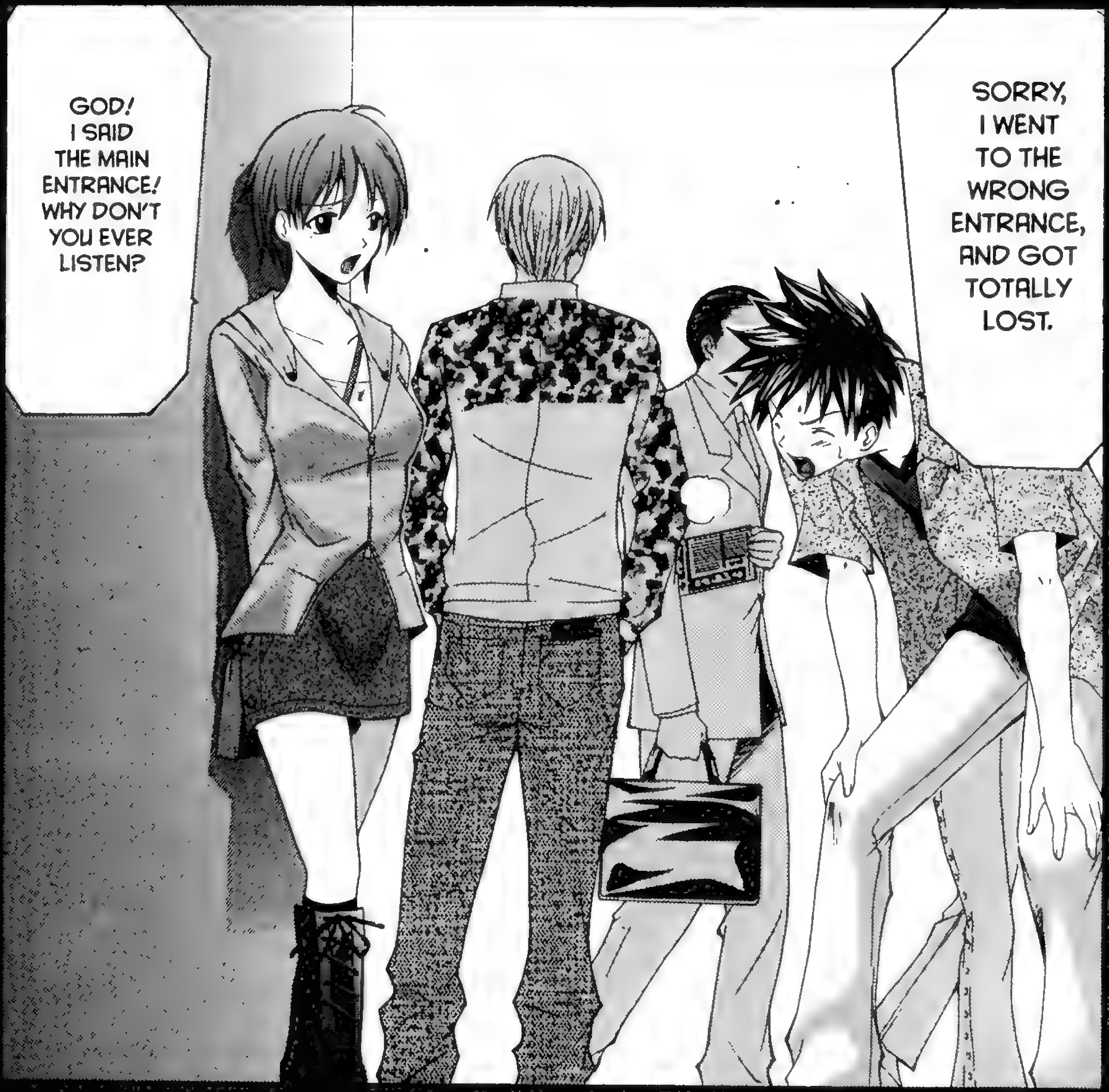
YEAH, I JUST WOULDN'T KNOW HOW TO PICK ONE OUT, SO...
MAYBE YOU COULD COME SHOPPING WITH ME TOMORROW IF YOU'RE NOT DOING ANYTHING, ASAHINA.
WHAT?
UH... JUST KIDDING. SORRY.
OH YEAH... I GUESS YOU CAN'T HAVE ANOTHER GIRL HELP YOU BUY A PRESENT FOR YOUR GIRLFRIEND.
....
FLIP
THIS IS TOTALLY AWKWARD.
I SHOULDN'T HAVE SAID ANYTHING.
I'LL JUST GO SHOPPING TOMORROW.
I'LL FIND SOMETHING.
I'LL GO WITH YOU.
HUH?

I'M DOING SOMETHING TOMORROW BUT....
I GUESS I COULD GO SHOPPING WITH YOU FOR A LITTLE BIT WHEN I'M DONE.
HUH?
REALLY?
I MEAN, I'M THE ONE WHO TOLD YOU TO GET HER A NECKLACE...
IF YOU GO BY YOURSELF, YOU'LL END UP BUYING SOME UGLY PIECE OF CRAP, AND I'LL FEEL RESPONSIBLE.
RANCID

THANKS! YOU JUST SAVED MY ASS.
SERIOUSLY, I WAS FREAKING OUT!
DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT.
カマザキ
DAILY
OKAY...
SO...
FOODS &
with
パラッ
FLIP
WHY DON'T WE MEET AT THE MAIN ENTRANCE TO SHINJUKU STATION AT TWO O'CLOCK?
OKAY, COOL! THANK YOU SO MUCH.
DON'T BE LATE. I DON'T WANNA WAIT AROUND FOR YOU.
I'LL BE THERE.
....
TH-THIS IS NO BIG DEAL, RIGHT?
I MEAN, IT'S NOT LIKE IT'S A DATE. IT'S JUST A LITTLE SHOPPING TRIP.
. . .

BESIDES, I'M ONLY DOING IT SO I CAN GET A PRESENT FOR HONOKA-CHAN.
15
16
17
MY BIRTHDAY ♡
I GUESS AKITSUKI-KUN...
...DOESN'T KNOW ABOUT MY BIRTHDAY.

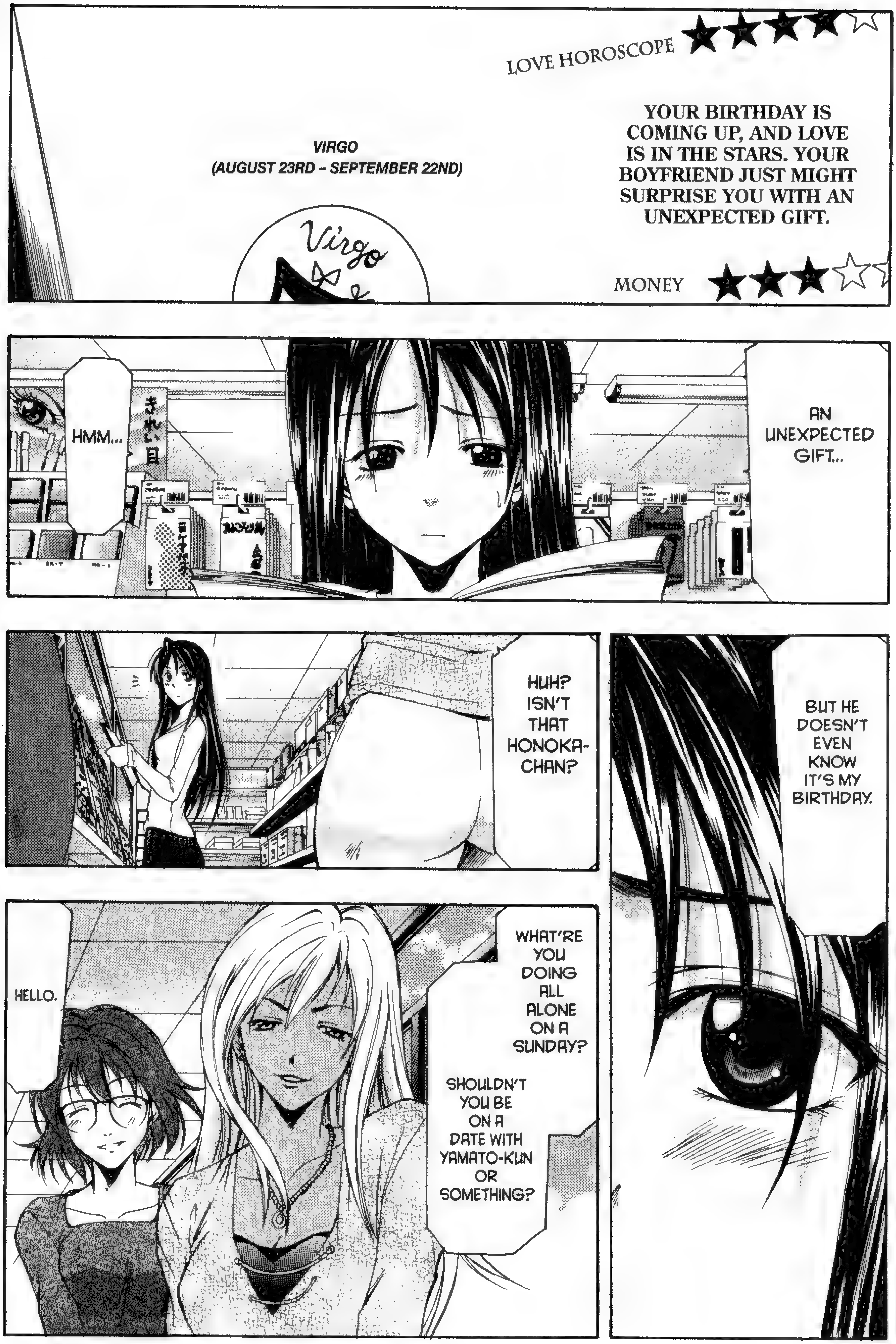
HUSTLE
BUSTLE
9/15 TUE 14:15
FWICK
GOD, HE BEGS ME TO HELP HIM...
...AND HE DOESN'T EVEN BOTHER TO SHOW UP.
ASAHINA!
TAPPA
TAPPA


SORRY, I WENT TO THE WRONG ENTRANCE, AND GOT TOTALLY LOST.
GOD! I SAID THE MAIN ENTRANCE! WHY DON'T YOU EVER LISTEN?

SUZUKA

#49 SHINJUKU

SORRY, I'VE NEVER EVEN BEEN TO SHINJUKU BEFORE.
WHY COULDN'T WE HAVE JUST GONE TO IKEBUKURO? THAT'S RIGHT ON YOUR WAY HOME.
GOD, THINK ABOUT IT FOR A SECOND!
IF WE WENT TO IKEBUKURO, WE'D PROBABLY END UP RUNNING INTO PEOPLE FROM SCHOOL.
HUH?
AH...
OH YEAH.
JR 新宿駅 Shinjuku Station
WHATEVER, LET'S JUST GO.
SO WHAT STYLE OF JEWELRY DOES HONOKA-CHAN LIKE?
WHAT STYLE?
UH... I DON'T KNOW. I MEAN, WE DON'T REALLY TALK ABOUT THAT STUFF, SO...
....
OKAY, FINE. LET'S JUST START HITTING THE STORES.
O-OKAY.


LOVE HOROSCOPE
YOUR BIRTHDAY IS COMING UP, AND LOVE IS IN THE STARS. YOUR BOYFRIEND JUST MIGHT SURPRISE YOU WITH AN UNEXPECTED GIFT.
VIRGO (AUGUST 23RD - SEPTEMBER 22ND)
Virgo
MONEY
AN UNEXPECTED GIFT...
HMM...
きれい目
BUT HE DOESN'T EVEN KNOW IT'S MY BIRTHDAY.
HUH? ISN'T THAT HONOKA-CHAN?
WHAT'RE YOU DOING ALL ALONE ON A SUNDAY?
SHOULDN'T YOU BE ON A DATE WITH YAMATO-KUN OR SOMETHING?
HELLO.

UH... AKITSUKI-KUN IS HANGING OUT WITH HATTORI-KUN TODAY.
HUH?
OH, THAT'S RIGHT. HE WENT OUT TO BUY YOU A BIRTHDAY PRESENT.
S-SAOTOME-SAN!
YAMATO-KUN SAID HE WANTED TO SURPRISE HER.
AH...
A BIRTHDAY PRESENT FOR ME?
S-SORRY, JUST FORGET I SAID THAT.
HE'S PROBABLY GONNA GET YOU SOMETHING CRAPPY, SO JUST MAKE SURE YOU ACT REALLY EXCITED.
GEEZ, YOU RUINED EVERYTHING. IT WAS SUPPOSED TO BE A SURPRISE.
WHATEVER.
AKITSUKI-KUN IS OUT BUYING A PRESENT FOR ME?

OH...
BACK ISSUES
SO HE DOES KNOW...
NOW I HAVE TO DO SOMETHING FOR HIM.
I MEAN, I DIDN'T EVEN DO ANYTHING FOR AKITSUKI-KUN ON HIS BIRTHDAY.
パラッ
FLIP
THAI STYLE SPICY CURRY
食材：
新宿伊勢丹地下
THIS IS REALLY GOOD!
YOU COULD BE ON IRON CHEF!
MAYBE...
I'LL GO SHOPPING.
JCB CARD
STUDIO ALTA
英会話
NO
Panasonic
ふんわりタッチ

WAH.
WHOA, I'VE NEVER BEEN TO A STORE LIKE THIS.
I FEEL SO OUT OF PLACE.
GET OVER HERE, AND HELP ME PICK ONE, YAMATO-KUN.
QUIT SPACING OUT.
HUH? OH, OKAY.
THIS IS CUTE, BUT IT MIGHT BE A LITTLE FLASHY FOR HONOKA-CHAN.
UH, YEAH... MAYBE.
I DON'T REALLY KNOW.
SHE'D PROBABLY WANT SOMETHING A LITTLE MORE SUBTLE, DON'T YOU THINK?
......
WELL, WHY DON'T WE TRY ANOTHER STORE?
Y-YEAH, OKAY.

MAYBE WE SHOULD JUST GO TO SHIBUYA.
AH.
YEAH, THAT MIGHT BE GOOD.
......
I'M SO GLAD I ASKED ASAHINA FOR HELP.
NO TRESPASSING
PARCO
I HAVE NO IDEA WHAT KIND OF PRESENT A GIRL WOULD LIKE.
BUT ASAHINA KNOWS ALL ABOUT FASHION, AND SHE LOVES TO SHOP.
IF I LET HER HANDLE IT, I'M SURE SHE'LL PICK SOMETHING GOOD.

STEP
STEP
WHAT'S WRONG? ARE YOU TIRED?
...NO.
I THINK HONOKA-CHAN WOULD LIKE THE NECKLACES WE SAW AT MARUI AND ISETAN.
SO NOW ALL YOU HAVE TO DO IS PICK THE ONE YOU LIKE BEST, YAMATO-KUN.
TH-THE ONE I LIKE BEST?
SORRY... I DON'T REALLY REMEMBER WHAT THEY LOOKED LIKE.
WHAT?
I-I MEAN...
I'LL JUST GET WHICHEVER ONE YOU LIKE BEST, ASAHINA...

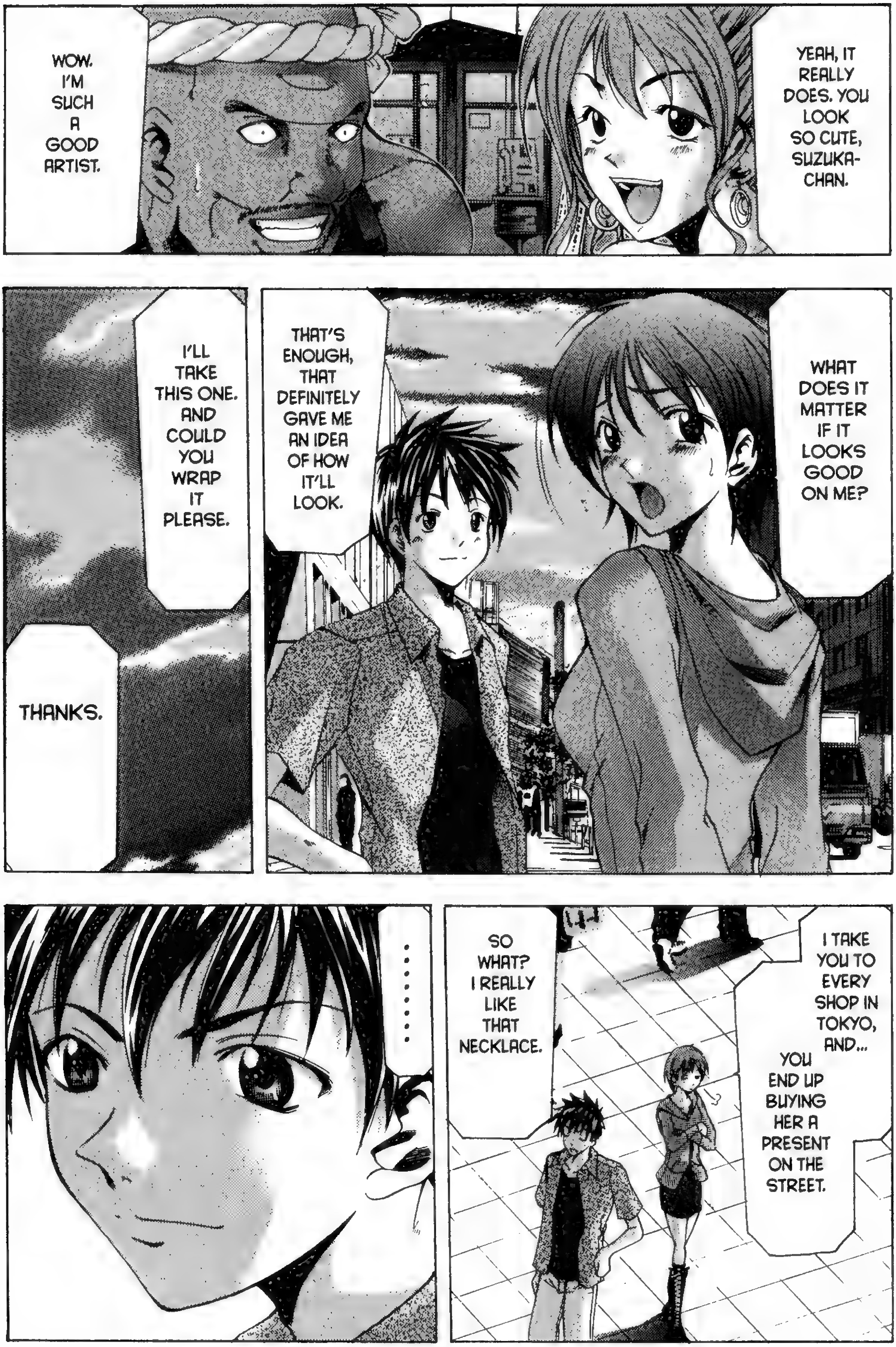
THAT'S IT!
HUH?
UH...
NO MATTER WHAT I ASK YOU...NO MATTER HOW MANY THINGS I SHOW YOU, ALL YOU CAN SAY IS I DON'T KNOW.
GET YOUR SHIT TOGETHER.

WHAT'S THE POINT OF GETTING HER A PRESENT IF YOU CAN'T EVEN CHOOSE SOMETHING YOURSELF?
I'M GOING HOME.
ASAHINA...
UH...
I'M SORRY...
I...
HEY, YOU TWO. QUIT FIGHTING IN FRONT OF MY SHOP.
HUH?

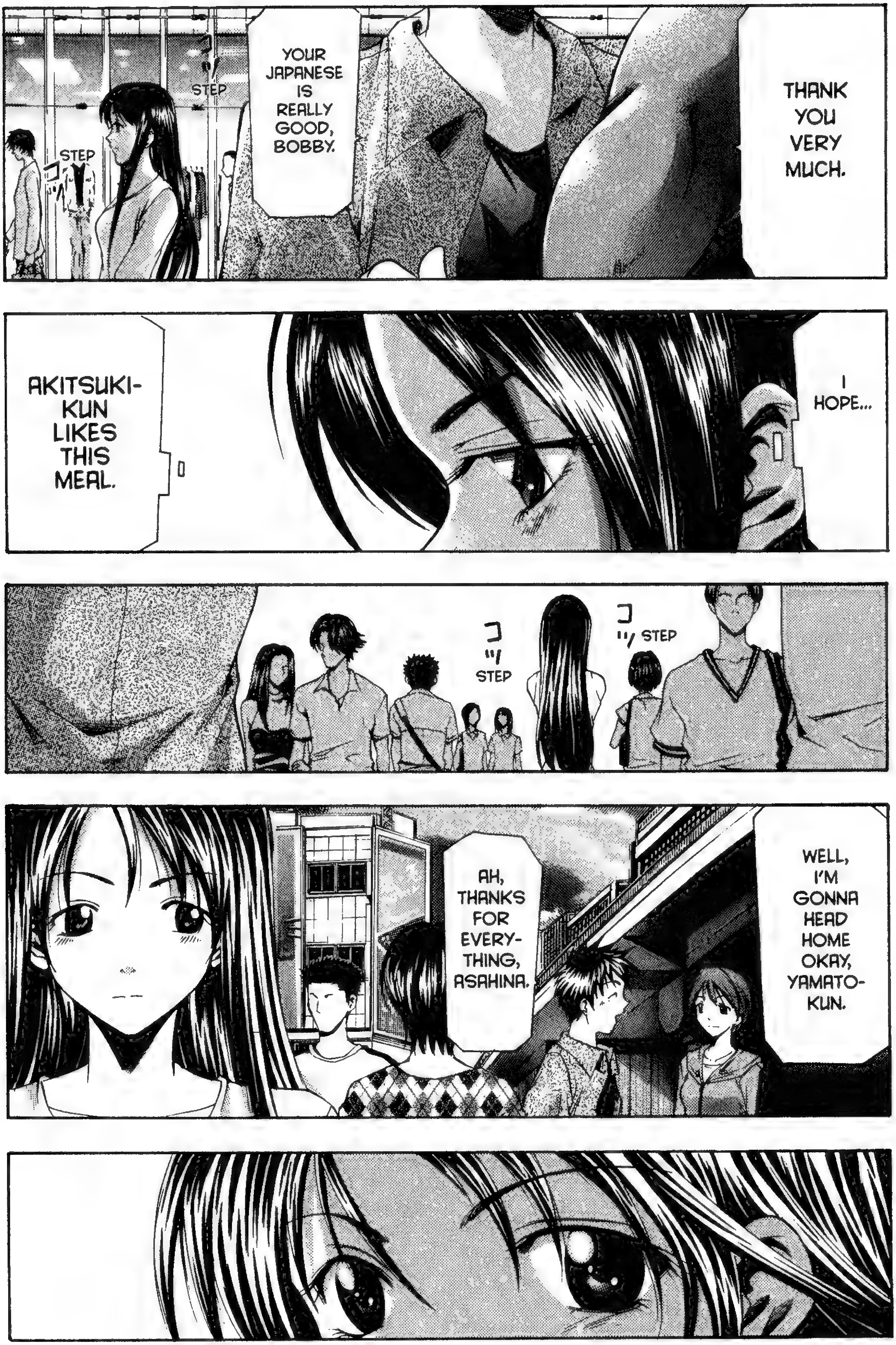
NOW YOU HAVE TO BUY SOMETHING TO MAKE UP FOR DRIVING MY CUSTOMERS AWAY.
I'LL GIVE YOU A GOOD DEAL.
HUH... YOU'RE THE NEWSPAPER GIRL... AND THE CABLE GIRL... AREN'T YOU?
HEY, SUZUKA-CHAN! WIPE THAT FROWN OFF YOUR FACE, AND CHECK OUT MY SELECTION.
IT WON'T COST YOU ANYTHING TO LOOK.
BUT I...
BOBBY MADE THESE ALL BY HIMSELF. PRETTY AMAZING, HUH?
HEY, WHAT'S UP?
WOW, THIS STUFF IS PRETTY COOL.

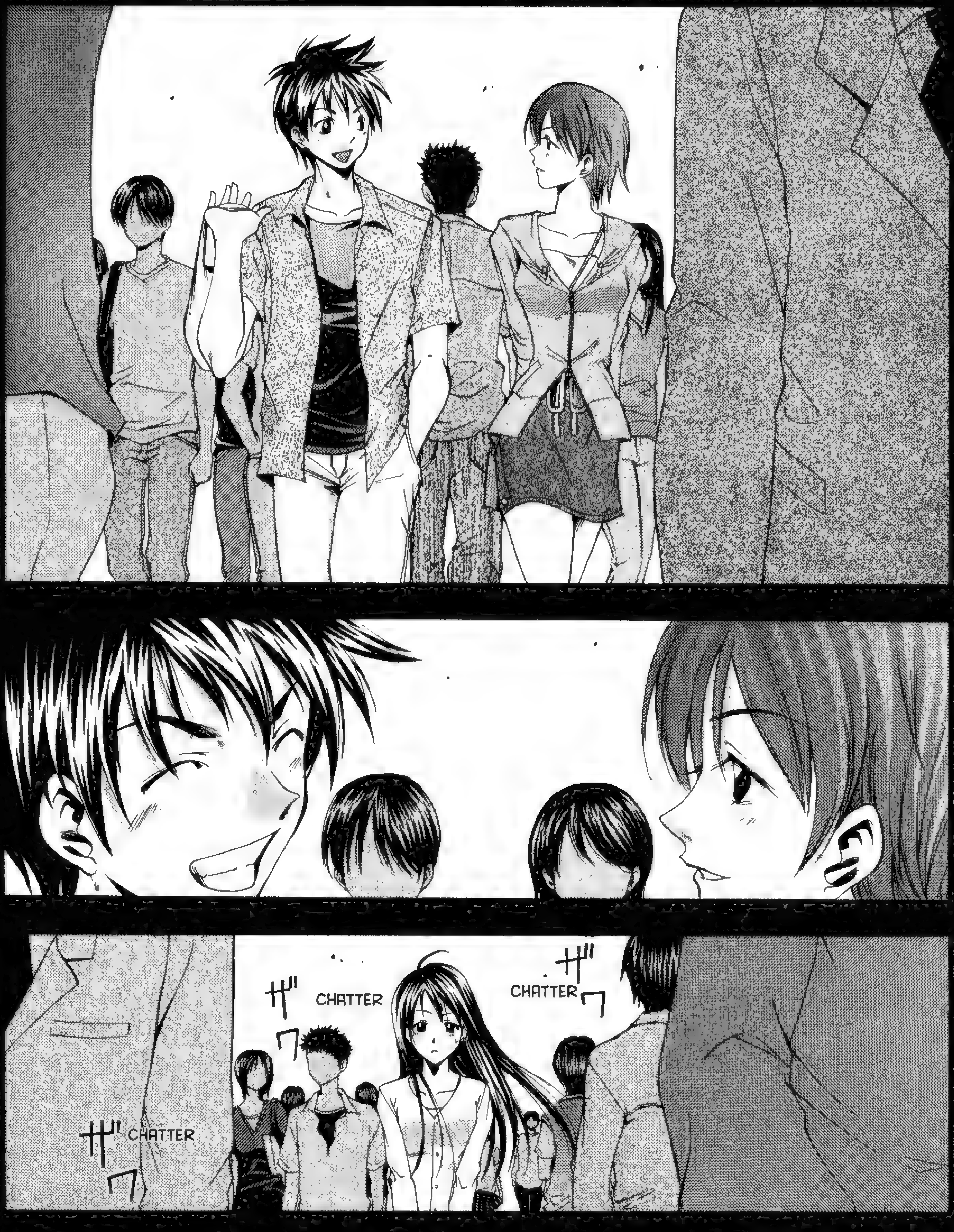
WE'VE GOT LOTS OF STUFF FOR GIRLS, TOO.
THEY MAKE GREAT GIFTS.
GIFTS?
YEAH, THE STYLE IS REALLY SIMPLE SO YOU CAN WEAR THEM WITH ANYTHING.
....
HMMM.
HEY, ASAHINA. WOULD YOU PUT THIS ON FOR A SEC?
HUH?
NO WAY. WHY THE HELL SHOULD I HAVE TO...
...WAIT, YOU MEAN YOU'RE ACTUALLY CONSIDERING GETTING HER BIRTHDAY PRESENT HERE?
WOULD YOU JUST PUT IT ON.
I THINK IT'LL LOOK GOOD.
OKAY?

FINE.
I'LL PUT IT ON.
スッ SWIP
OKAY... DOES THAT GIVE YOU AN IDEA OF HOW IT'LL LOOK.
YEAH!
THAT LOOKS SO CUTE ON YOU!
HUH?


YEAH, IT REALLY DOES. YOU LOOK SO CUTE, SUZUKA-CHAN.
WOW. I'M SUCH A GOOD ARTIST.
WHAT DOES IT MATTER IF IT LOOKS GOOD ON ME?
THAT'S ENOUGH, THAT DEFINITELY GAVE ME AN IDEA OF HOW IT'LL LOOK.
I'LL TAKE THIS ONE. AND COULD YOU WRAP IT PLEASE.
THANKS.
I TAKE YOU TO EVERY SHOP IN TOKYO, AND...
YOU END UP BUYING HER A PRESENT ON THE STREET.
SO WHAT? I REALLY LIKE THAT NECKLACE.
....

I'LL BET HONOKA-CHAN'LL BE REALLY HAPPY.
コツ STEP
コツ STEP
WOW, IT COST MORE THAN I THOUGHT TO BUY ALL THE INGREDIENTS.
MAYBE I SPENT A LITTLE TOO MUCH.
AH!
YASUNOBU! I MADE PLANS TO HANG OUT WITH YASUNOBU.
くすっ TEE HEE
WELL... HE'S OUT BUYING A PRESENT FOR ME, SO...
THE LEAST I COULD DO IS MAKE A NICE DINNER FOR HIM.


THANK YOU VERY MUCH.
YOUR JAPANESE IS REALLY GOOD, BOBBY.
コツ STEP
コツ STEP
I HOPE...
AKITSUKI-KUN LIKES THIS MEAL.
コツ STEP
コツ STEP
WELL, I'M GONNA HEAD HOME OKAY, YAMATO-KUN.
AH, THANKS FOR EVERYTHING, ASAHINA.


ザワ CHATTER
ザワ CHATTER
ザワ CHATTER
... WHA-?

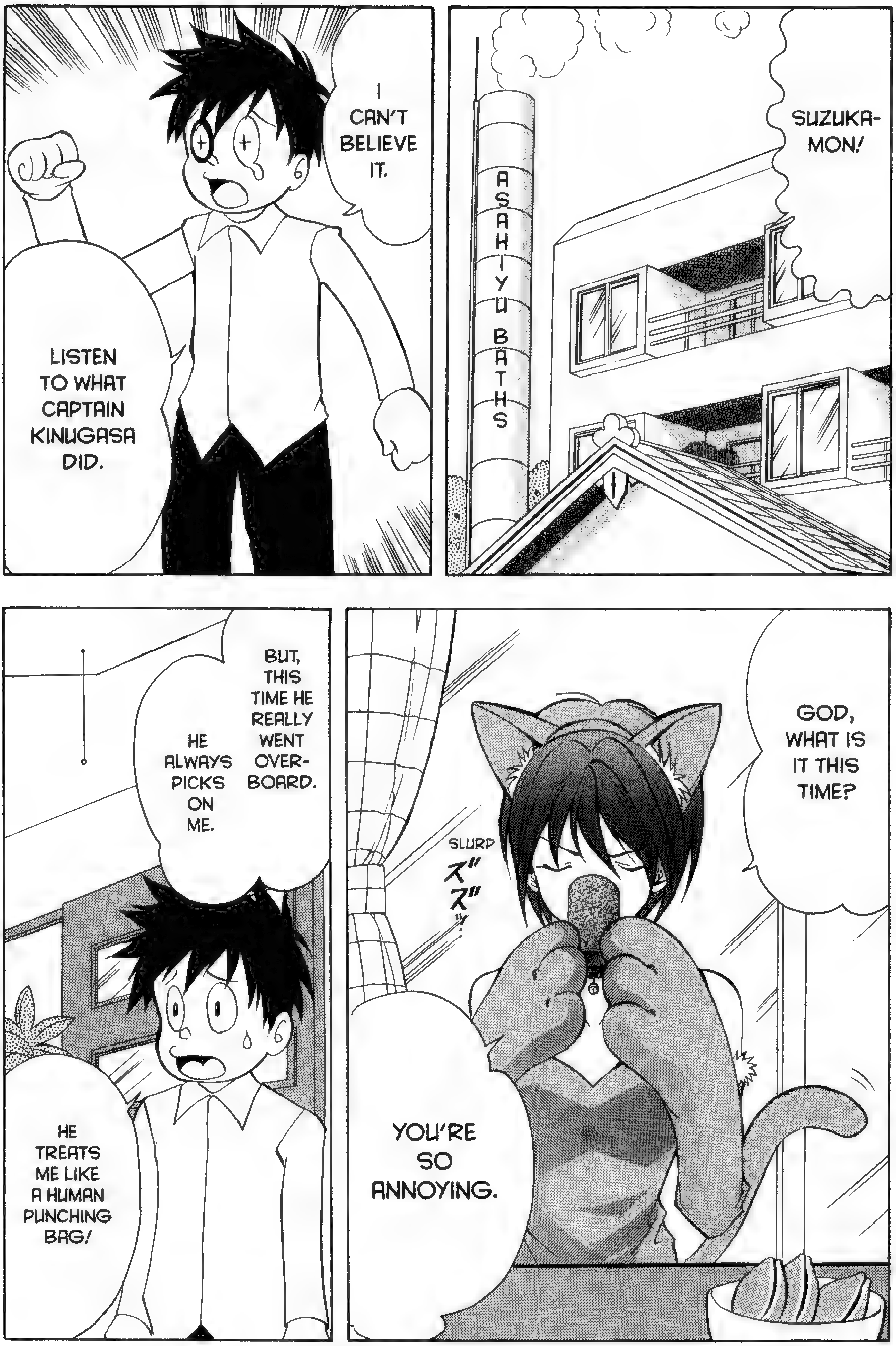
CONTINUED IN VOLUME 7

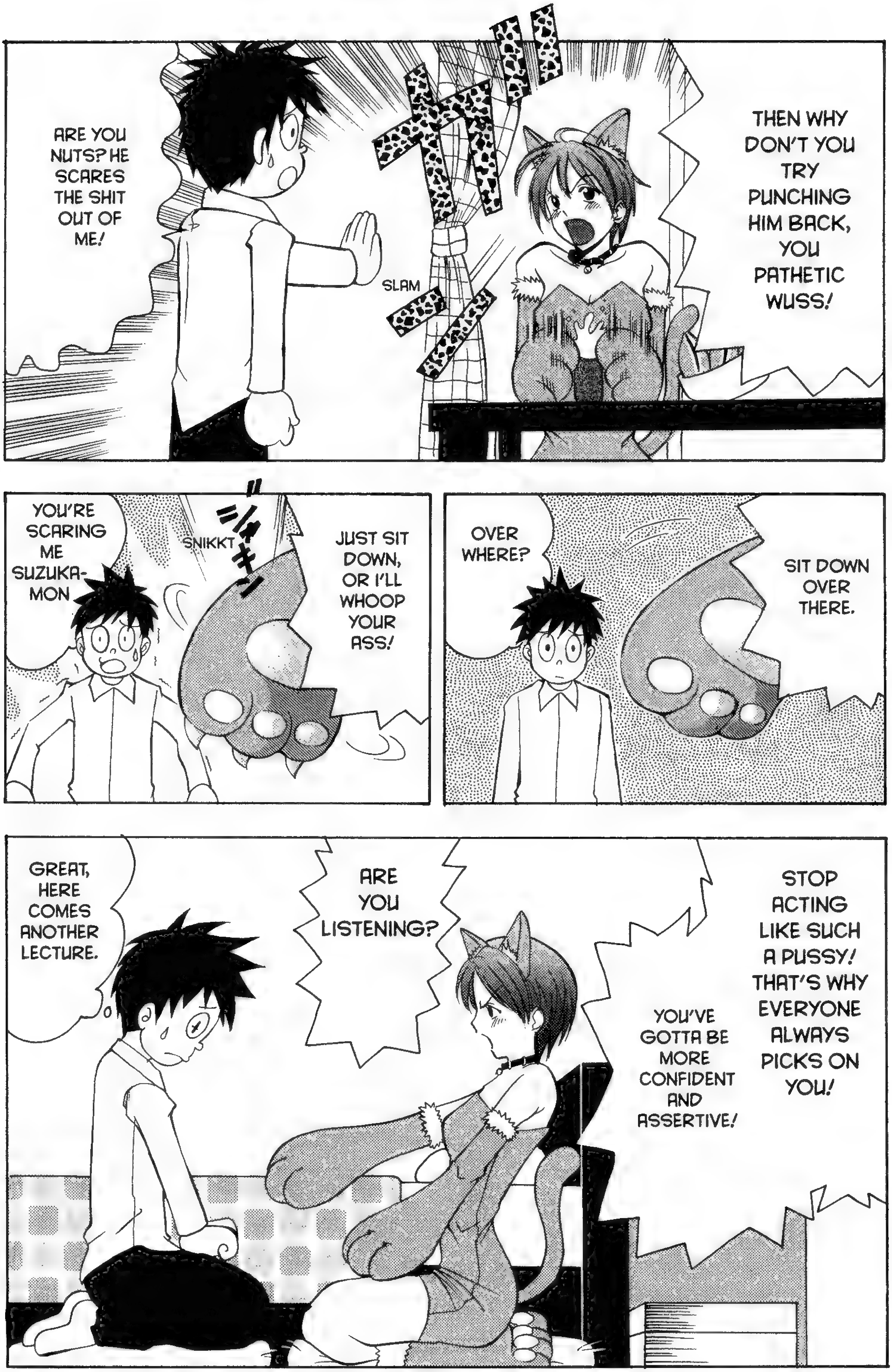
SUZUKA-MON

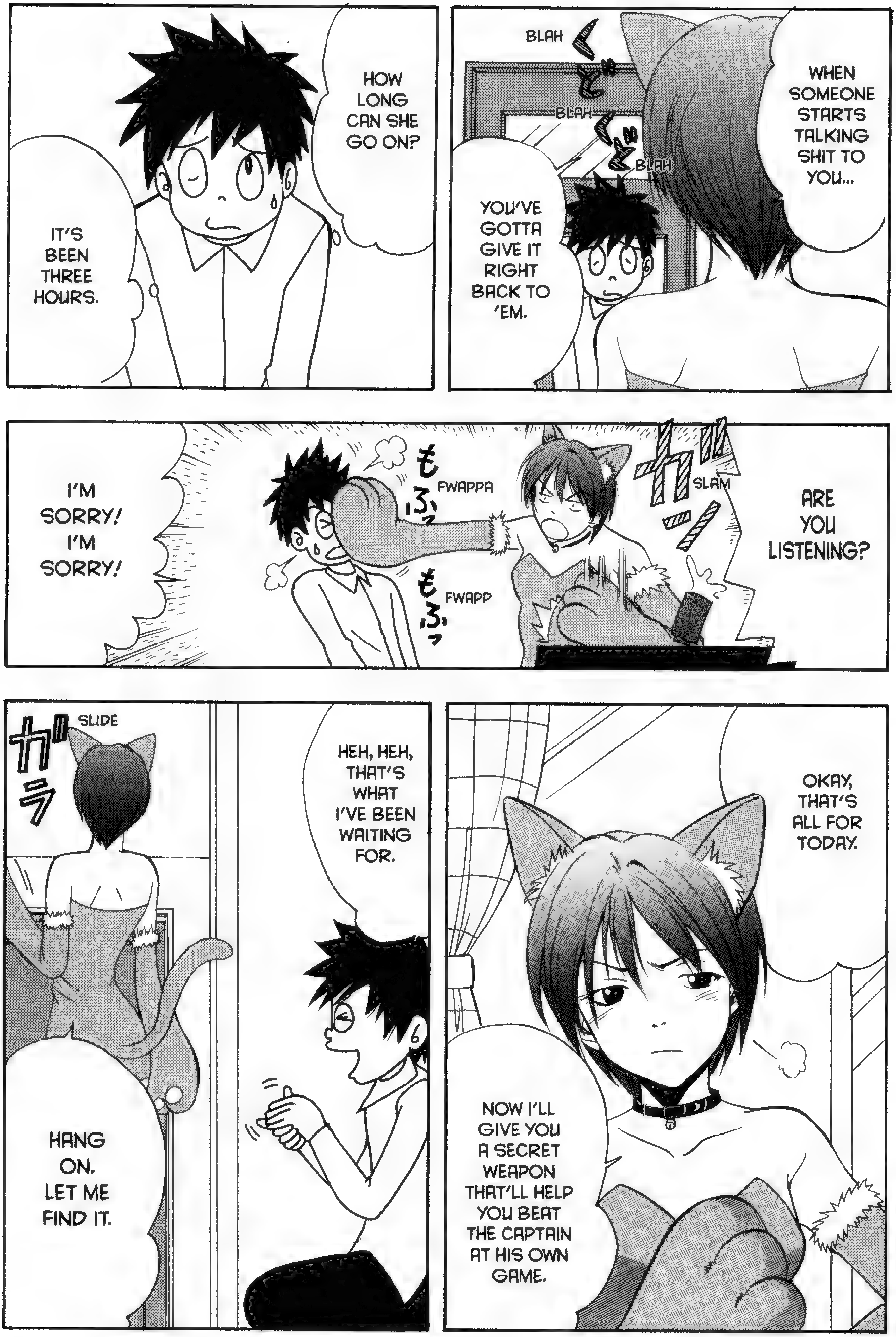
KABUTO
COMICS

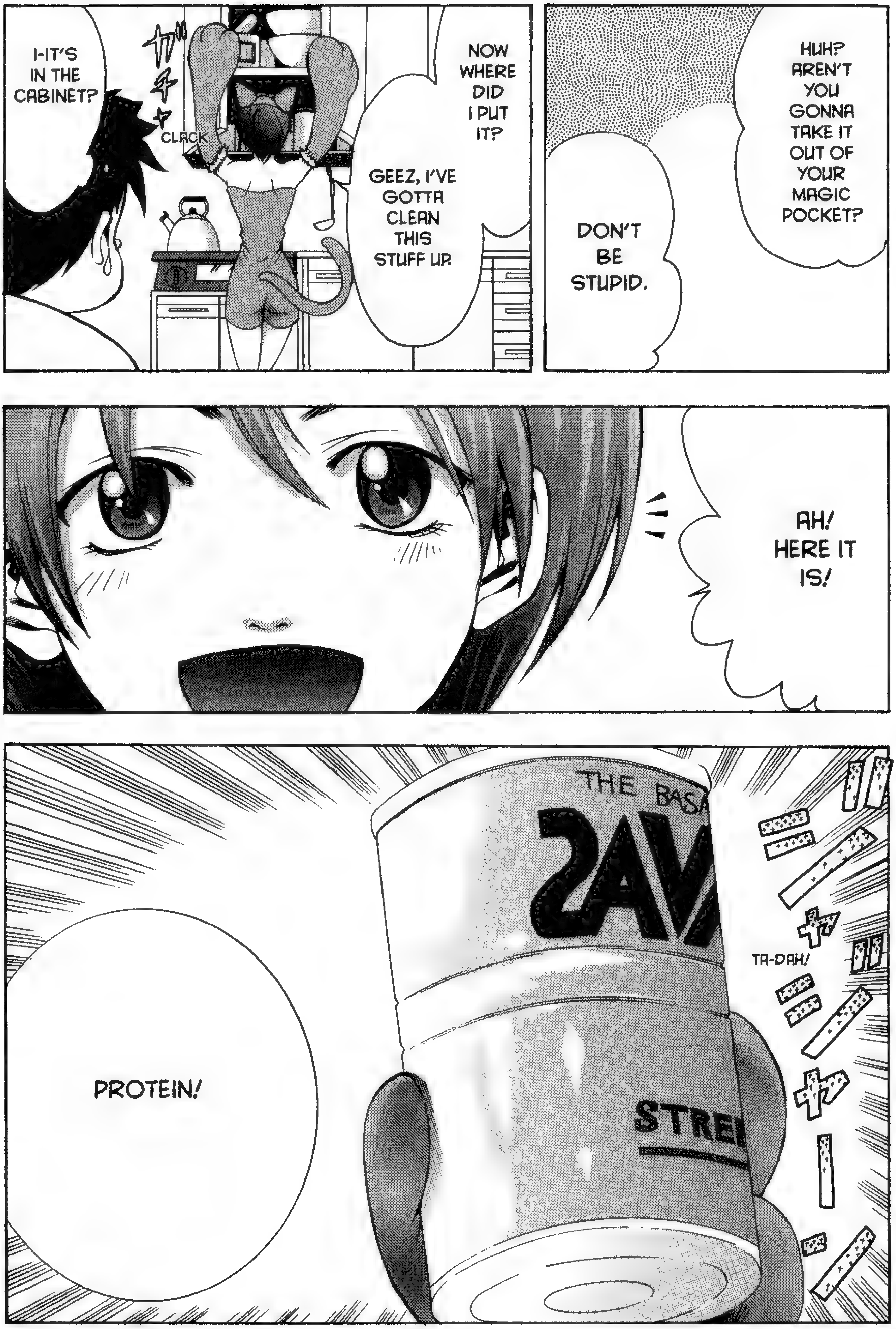
CHAPTER 1
THE PROTEIN SUPPLEMENT

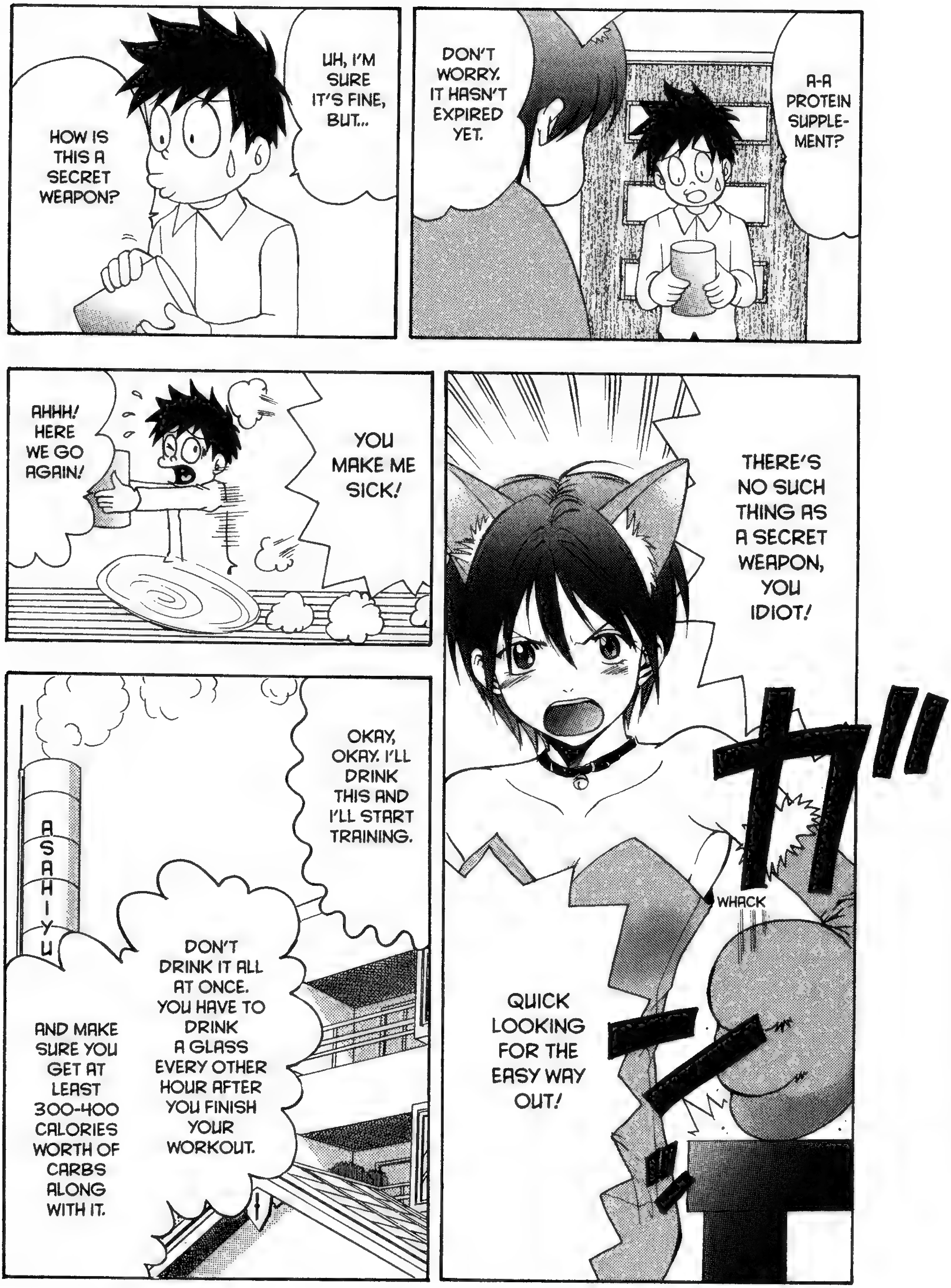
KOUJI SEO

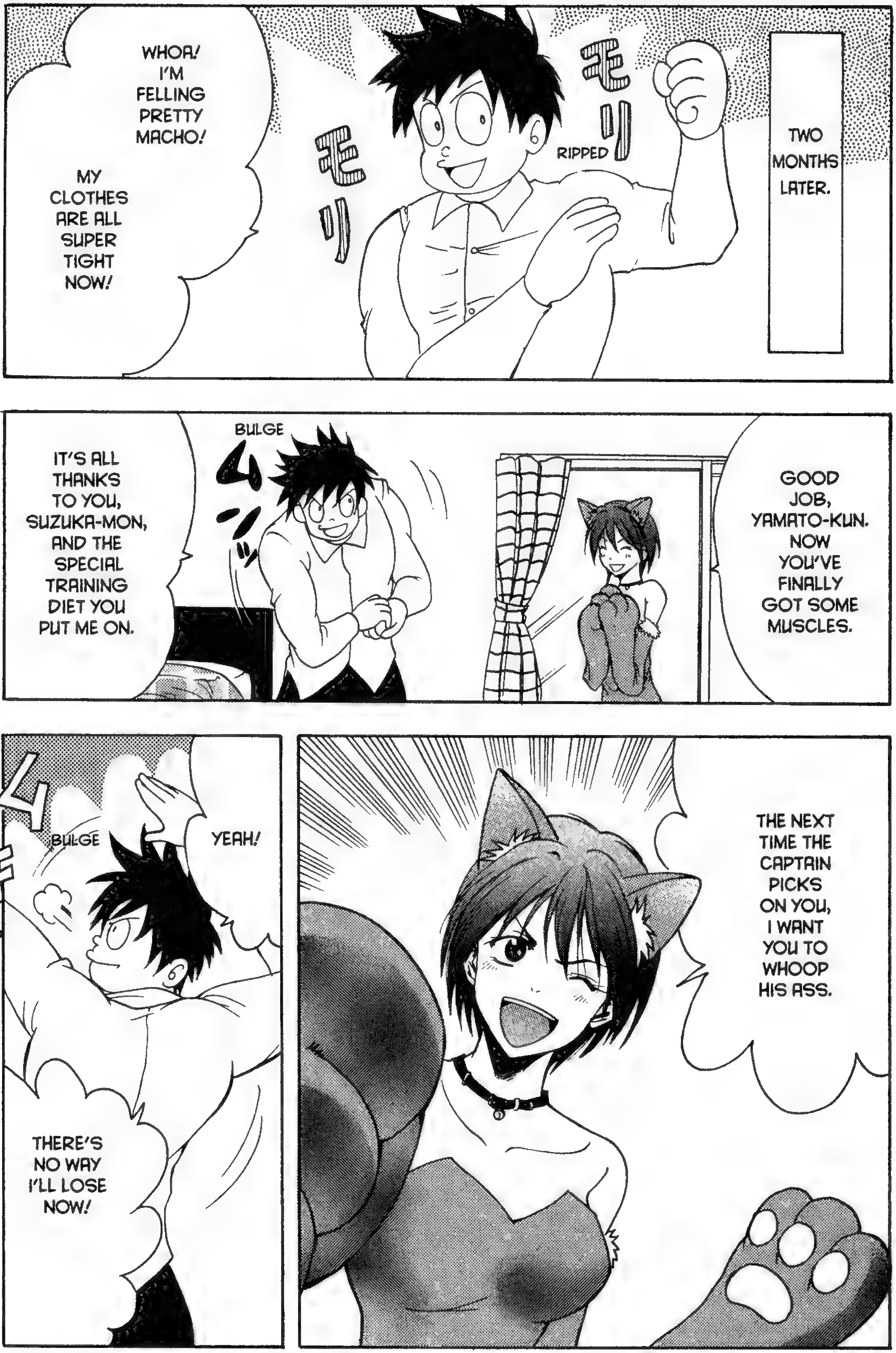

ASAHI-YU BATHS
SUZUKAMON!
I CAN'T BELIEVE IT.
LISTEN TO WHAT CAPTAIN KINUGASA DID.
GOD, WHAT IS IT THIS TIME?
SLURP ズズッ
YOU'RE SO ANNOYING.
HE ALWAYS PICKS ON ME.
BUT, THIS TIME HE REALLY WENT OVERBOARD.
HE TREATS ME LIKE A HUMAN PUNCHING BAG!

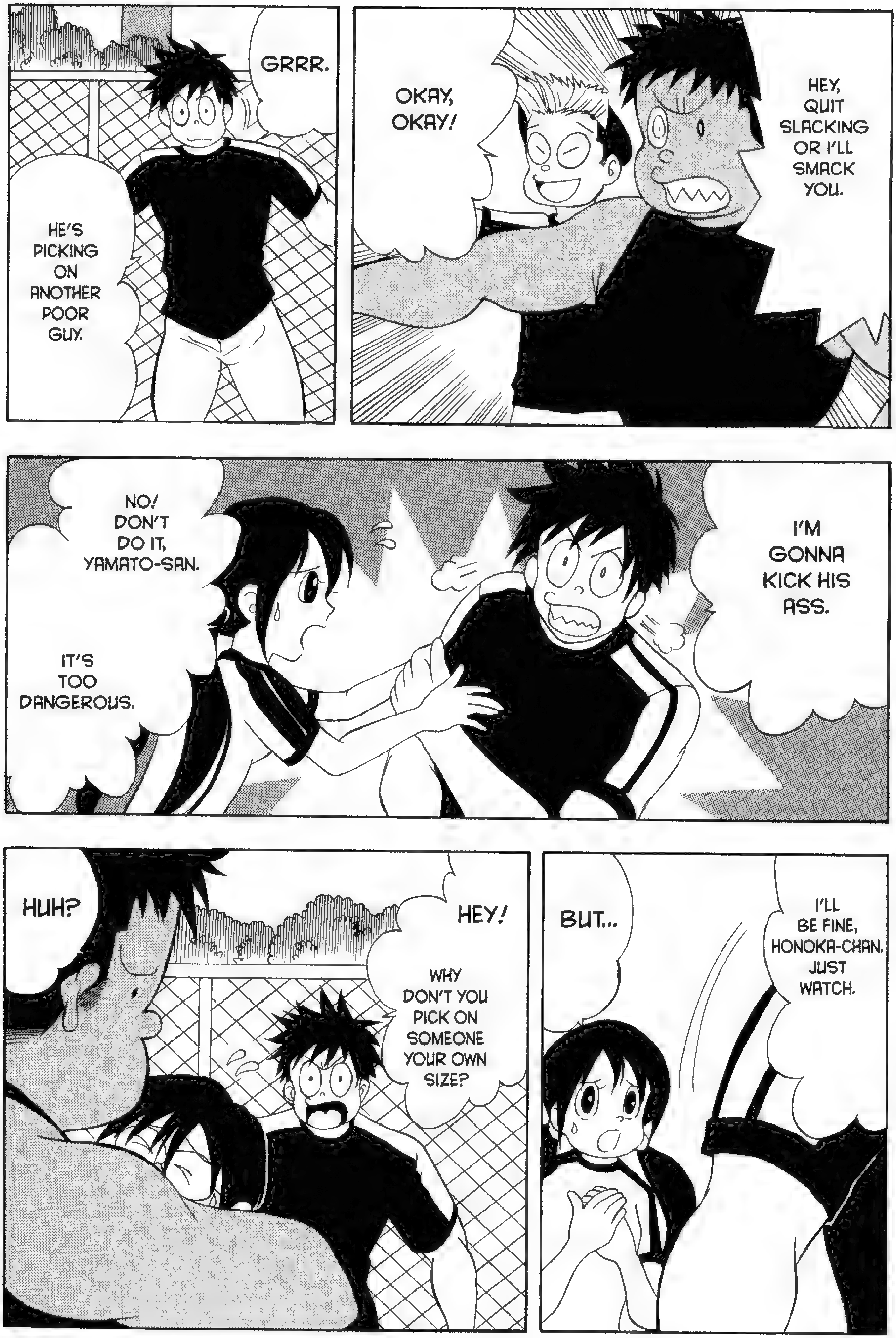

ARE YOU NUTS? HE SCARES THE SHIT OUT OF ME!
SLAM
THEN WHY DON'T YOU TRY PUNCHING HIM BACK, YOU PATHETIC WUSS!
SNIKKT
JUST SIT DOWN, OR I'LL WHOOP YOUR ASS!
YOU'RE SCARING ME SUZUKA-MON
OVER WHERE?
SIT DOWN OVER THERE.
STOP ACTING LIKE SUCH A PUSSY! THAT'S WHY EVERYONE ALWAYS PICKS ON YOU!
YOU'VE GOTTA BE MORE CONFIDENT AND ASSERTIVE!
ARE YOU LISTENING?
GREAT, HERE COMES ANOTHER LECTURE.


BLAH
BLAH
BLAH
WHEN SOMEONE STARTS TALKING SHIT TO YOU...
YOU'VE GOTTA GIVE IT RIGHT BACK TO 'EM.
HOW LONG CAN SHE GO ON?
IT'S BEEN THREE HOURS.
ガッ
SLAM
ARE YOU LISTENING?
もふっ
FWAPPA
もふっ
FWAPP
I'M SORRY! I'M SORRY!
OKAY, THAT'S ALL FOR TODAY.
NOW I'LL GIVE YOU A SECRET WEAPON THAT'LL HELP YOU BEAT THE CAPTAIN AT HIS OWN GAME.
HEH, HEH, THAT'S WHAT I'VE BEEN WAITING FOR.
ガラ
SLIDE
HANG ON. LET ME FIND IT.

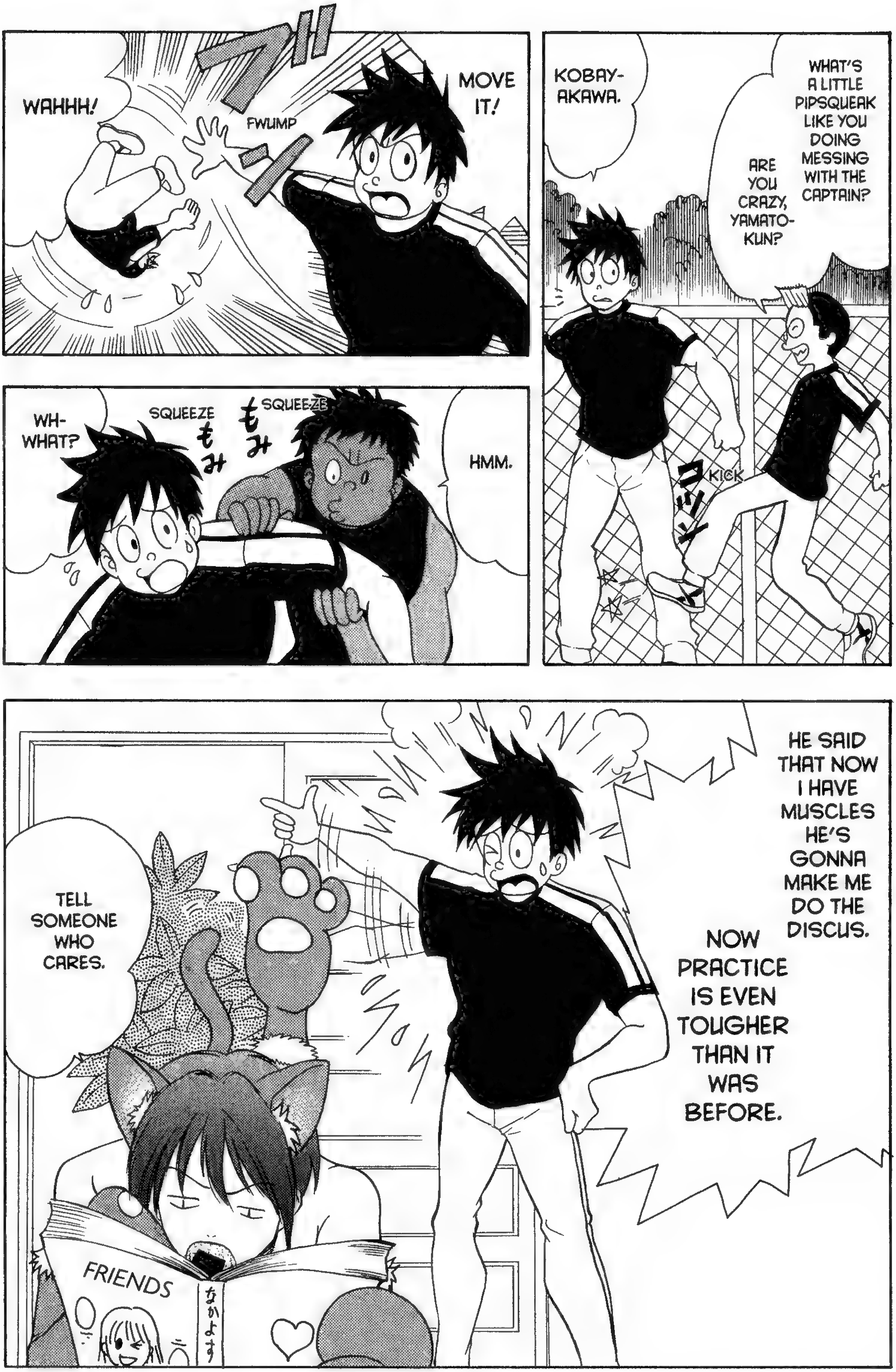

HUH? AREN'T YOU GONNA TAKE IT OUT OF YOUR MAGIC POCKET?
DON'T BE STUPID.
NOW WHERE DID I PUT IT?
GEEZ, I'VE GOTTA CLEAN THIS STUFF UP.
ガチャ
CLACK
I-IT'S IN THE CABINET?
AH! HERE IT IS!
TA-DAH!
THE BASA
SAVA
STRE
PROTEIN!


A-A PROTEIN SUPPLEMENT?
DON'T WORRY. IT HASN'T EXPIRED YET.
UH, I'M SURE IT'S FINE, BUT...
HOW IS THIS A SECRET WEAPON?
THERE'S NO SUCH THING AS A SECRET WEAPON, YOU IDIOT!
ガッ
WHACK
QUICK LOOKING FOR THE EASY WAY OUT!
YOU MAKE ME SICK!
AHHH! HERE WE GO AGAIN!
OKAY, OKAY. I'LL DRINK THIS AND I'LL START TRAINING.
ASAHIYU
DON'T DRINK IT ALL AT ONCE. YOU HAVE TO DRINK A GLASS EVERY OTHER HOUR AFTER YOU FINISH YOUR WORKOUT.
AND MAKE SURE YOU GET AT LEAST 300-400 CALORIES WORTH OF CARBS ALONG WITH IT.


TWO MONTHS LATER.
モリ
モリ
RIPPED
WHOA! I'M FELLING PRETTY MACHO!
MY CLOTHES ARE ALL SUPER TIGHT NOW!
GOOD JOB, YAMATO-KUN. NOW YOU'VE FINALLY GOT SOME MUSCLES.
ムン
BULGE
IT'S ALL THANKS TO YOU, SUZUKA-MON, AND THE SPECIAL TRAINING DIET YOU PUT ME ON.
THE NEXT TIME THE CAPTAIN PICKS ON YOU, I WANT YOU TO WHOOP HIS ASS.
YEAH!
ムキッ
BULGE
THERE'S NO WAY I'LL LOSE NOW!


HEY, QUIT SLACKING OR I'LL SMACK YOU.
OKAY, OKAY!
GRRR.
HE'S PICKING ON ANOTHER POOR GUY.
I'M GONNA KICK HIS ASS.
NO! DON'T DO IT, YAMATO-SAN.
IT'S TOO DANGEROUS.
I'LL BE FINE, HONOKA-CHAN. JUST WATCH.
BUT...
HEY!
WHY DON'T YOU PICK ON SOMEONE YOUR OWN SIZE?
HUH?

WHAT WILL BECOME OF YAMATO AND SUZUKA-MON? FIND OUT IN THE NEXT EPISODE. WAIT, IS THERE REALLY GONNA BE A NEXT EPISODE?


WHAT'S A LITTLE PIPSQUEAK LIKE YOU DOING MESSING WITH THE CAPTAIN?
ARE YOU CRAZY, YAMATO-KUN?
KOBAYAKAWA.
KICK
MOVE IT!
FWUMP
WAHHH!
HMM.
SQUEEZE
もみ
SQUEEZE
もみ
WH-WHAT?
HE SAID THAT NOW I HAVE MUSCLES HE'S GONNA MAKE ME DO THE DISCUS.
NOW PRACTICE IS EVEN TOUGHER THAN IT WAS BEFORE.
TELL SOMEONE WHO CARES.
FRIENDS
なかよす

✡ END OF CHAPTER 1 ✡

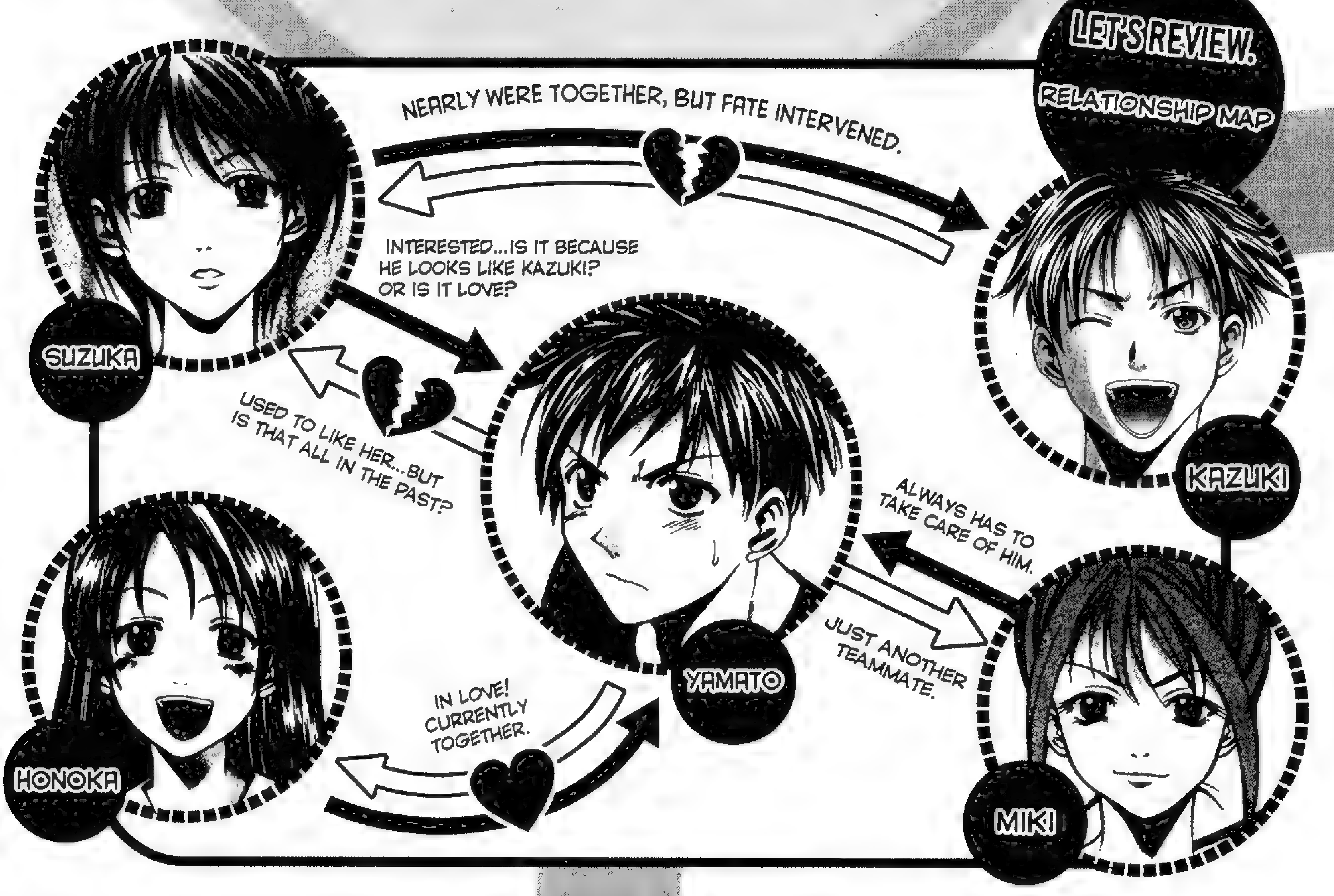
THE SEARCH FOR YAMATO'S IDEAL GIRLFRIEND

A KANJI FORTUNE-TELLING COMPATIBILITY TEST

HAS SUZUKA HAD A CHANGE OF HEART SINCE YAMATO STARTED GOING OUT WITH HONOKA?

...LOOKS LIKE THIS LOVE STORY IS GETTING MORE AND MORE COMPLICATED. THAT'S WHY...WE DECIDED TO DO A LITTLE COMPATIBILITY FORTUNE-TELLING TO DETERMINE WHOSE PERSONALITY WOULD MESH BEST WITH YAMATO'S! COMPARE OUR KANJI FORTUNE-TELLING COMPATIBILITY RESULTS WITH THE CHARACTERS' PERSONALITIES IN THE BOOK TO SEE IF THEY MATCH UP.

CHECK IT OUT! KANJI FORTUNE-TELLING REALLY WORKS!


LET'S REVIEW.
RELATIONSHIP MAP
NEARLY WERE TOGETHER, BUT FATE INTERVENED.
INTERESTED...IS IT BECAUSE HE LOOKS LIKE KAZUKI? OR IS IT LOVE?
SUZUKA
KAZUKI
USED TO LIKE HER...BUT IS THAT ALL IN THE PAST?
ALWAYS HAS TO TAKE CARE OF HIM.
JUST ANOTHER TEAMMATE.
YAMATO
IN LOVE! CURRENTLY TOGETHER.
HONOKA
MIKI

AKITSUKI YAMATO

NUMBER OF STROKES IN HIS NAME: 24 ○

CHARACTER PROFILE

VERY SIMPLE AND SOMEWHAT NAÏVE. NOT MUCH OF A DEEP THINKER, BUT ONCE HE STARTS THINKING, HE LOSES SIGHT OF EVERYTHING ELSE. DOESN'T KNOW THE FIRST THING ABOUT WOMEN.

FORTUNE-TELLING RESULTS

STUBBORN, HARDHEADED, AND ASSERTIVE. BUT WHEN HE ACTUALLY TAKES THE TIME TO LISTEN TO OTHER PEOPLE'S IDEAS, HE REALLY STARTS TO MAKE PROGRESS. AS STUBBORN AS HE IS, HE IS ALSO VERY CONSIDERATE TOWARD HIS FRIENDS AND LOVED ONES. THIS SHOULD HELP HIM LIVE A FULFILLING FAMILY LIFE.

YOU'VE GOTTA LISTEN TO PEOPLE MORE, YAMATO!

SUZUKA ASAHINA

NUMBER OF STROKES IN HER NAME: 44 △

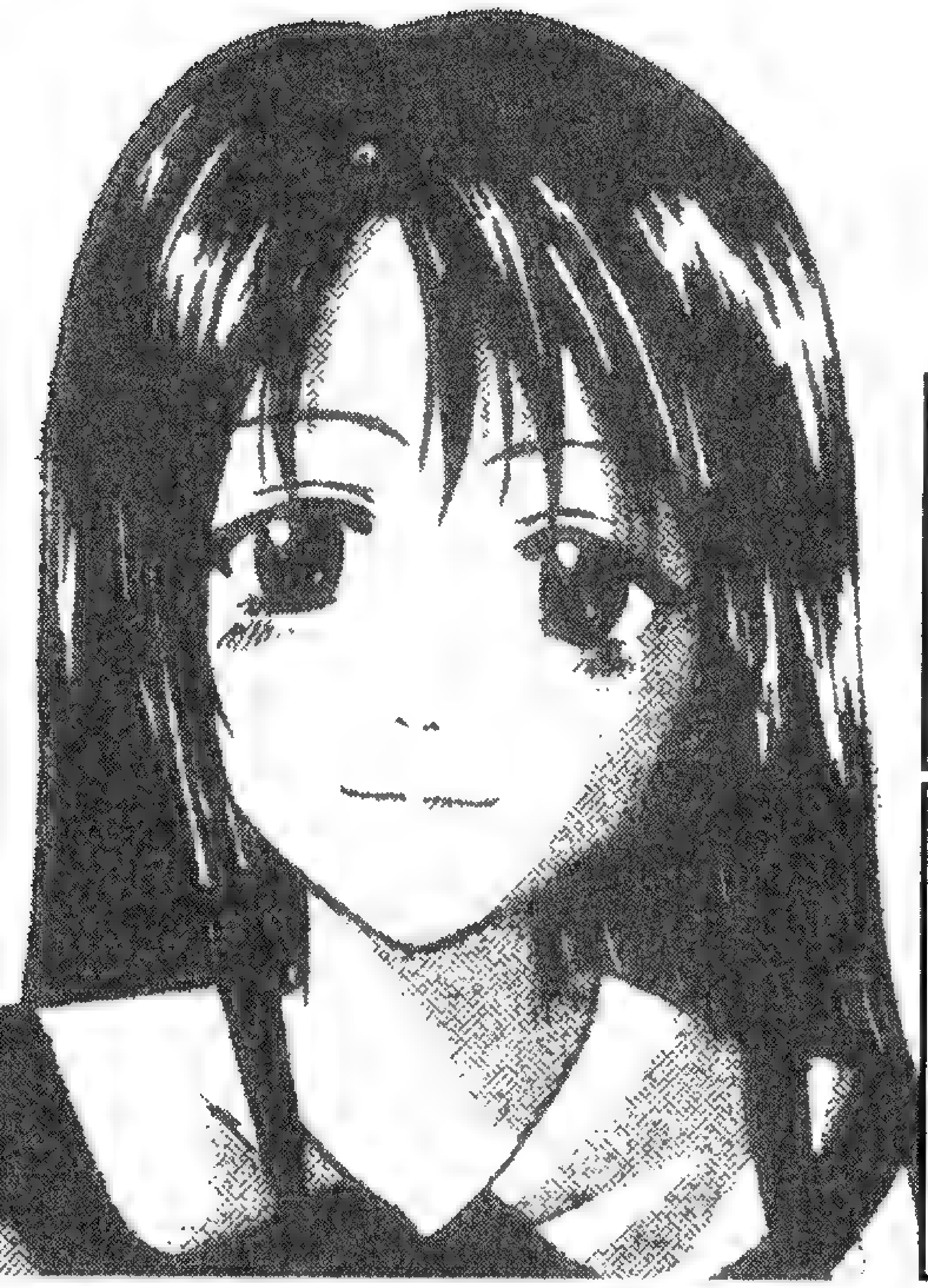
CHARACTER PROFILE

FULL OF PRIDE. SHE HOLDS HERSELF AND OTHERS TO THE HIGHEST STANDARDS. SHE ACTS TOUGH AND RARELY ALLOWS HERSELF TO APPEAR VULNERABLE, BUT... COULD SHE ACTUALLY BE A LONELY SOUL?

FORTUNE-TELLING RESULTS

INTELLIGENT AND FULL OF PRIDE. HAS A NERVOUS TEMPERAMENT AND IS EASILY IRRITATED. BUT IN THE FUTURE SHE WILL FIND HER SOULMATE AND HAVE A FAMILY. SHE WILL ENJOY A LOVING RELATIONSHIP.

FULL OF PRIDE... THAT PART'S DEFINITELY RIGHT!



HONOKA SAKURAI

NUMBER OF STROKES IN HER NAME: 33 ○

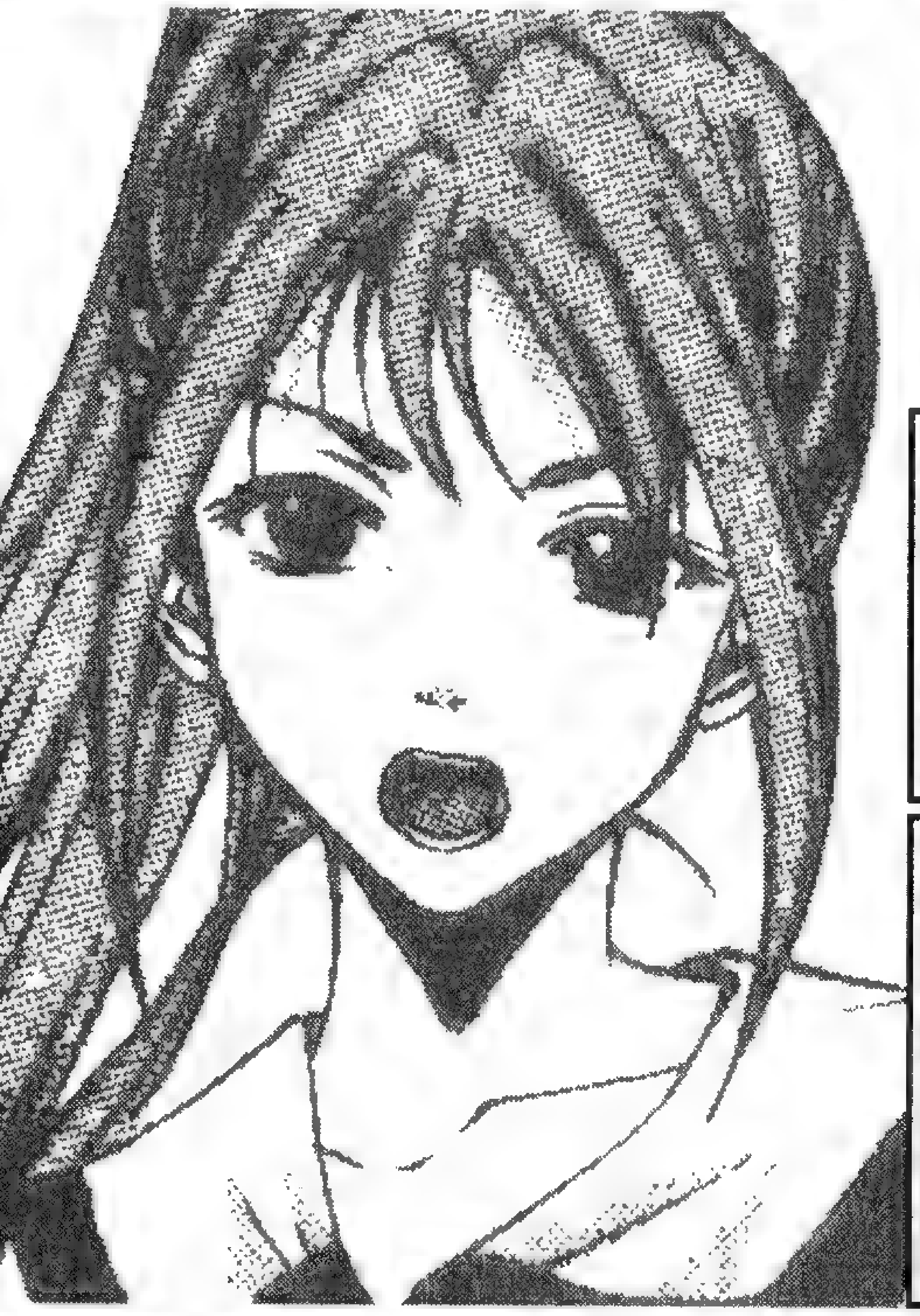
CHARACTER PROFILE

SWEET AND CUTE WITH A VERY WARM PERSONALITY. IF ONE HAD TO COMPARE HER TO A COLOR...IT'D BE PINK. BUT GIRLS LIKE HER OFTEN HAVE A BOLD, AGGRESSIVE SIDE HIDDEN DEEP WITHIN.

FORTUNE-TELLING RESULTS

GOOD-NATURED AND GENTLE, WITH A LOVING PERSONALITY. HAS NO DESIRE TO STAND OUT, SO SOMETIMES SHE GOES UNNOTICED, BUT SHE'S STEADILY BUILDING A STRONG FOUNDATION THAT WILL LEAD HER TO SUCCESS. SHE WILL BE BLESSED WITH A GOOD SOURCE OF INCOME. SHE WILL HAVE GOOD LUCK WITH MONEY AND CHILD REARING.

BLESSED WITH A GOOD SOURCE OF INCOME? DOES THAT MEAN SHE'LL MARRY INTO MONEY?



MIKI HASHIBA

NUMBER OF STROKES IN HER NAME: 33 ○

CHARACTER PROFILE

HAS NO PROBLEM SHOWING HER FEELINGS AND EMOTIONS. SHE'S TOUGH BUT HAS A VERY CHEERFUL PERSONALITY. GOOD AT TAKING CARE OF PEOPLE.

FORTUNE-TELLING RESULTS

PROUD AND STUBBORN. DESPISES LAZINESS AND IMMORAL BEHAVIOR. SEES EVERYTHING IN TERMS OF BLACK AND WHITE. WOMEN WITH THIS PERSONALITY OFTEN TAKE THE DOMINANT ROLE IN THEIR RELATIONSHIPS.

THE DOMINANT ROLE...I CAN SEE THAT.

THE RESULTS!

SPECIAL THANKS TO THE GOOD FOLKS AT HTTP://WWW.KOUFUKU.NE.JP FOR THEIR HELP WITH THE FORTUNE-TELLING.

THE BICKERING NEVER CEASES WITH SUZUKA AND YAMATO, BUT THEY STILL MIGHT GET ALONG AS A COUPLE. MIKI AND YAMATO WOULD BE BEST FRIENDS AND LOVERS. BUT IT LOOKS LIKE HONOKA-CHAN AND YAMATO MIGHT BE THE BEST MATCH. AS LONG AS YAMATO DOESN'T ABUSE HONOKA'S NATURAL SWEETNESS, THEY COULD BE A PERFECT COUPLE. LOOKS LIKE THESE FORTUNES ARE PRETTY MUCH IN LINE WITH WHAT'S TAKING PLACE IN THE STORY. BUT I GET THE FEELING THAT ROUGH WATERS LIE AHEAD FOR YAMATO AND HONOKA.

SO...

SUZUKA *GETS MORE AND MORE EXCITING WITH EVERY VOLUME!*

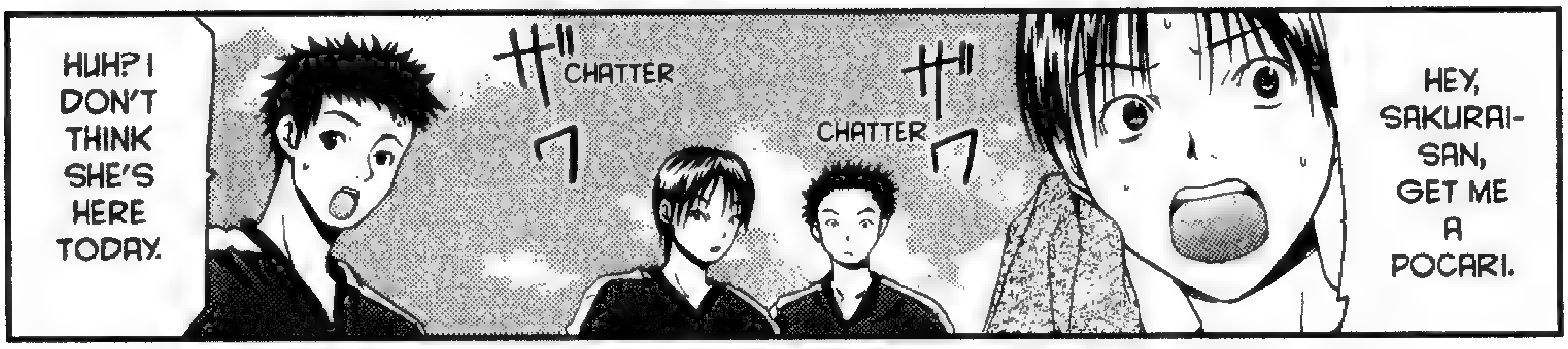
LOOK FOR BOOK 7 IN STORES SOON!

Translation Notes

Japanese is a tricky language for most Westerners, and translation is often more an art than a science. For your edification and reading pleasure, here are notes on some of the places where we could have gone in a different direction or where a Japanese cultural reference is used.

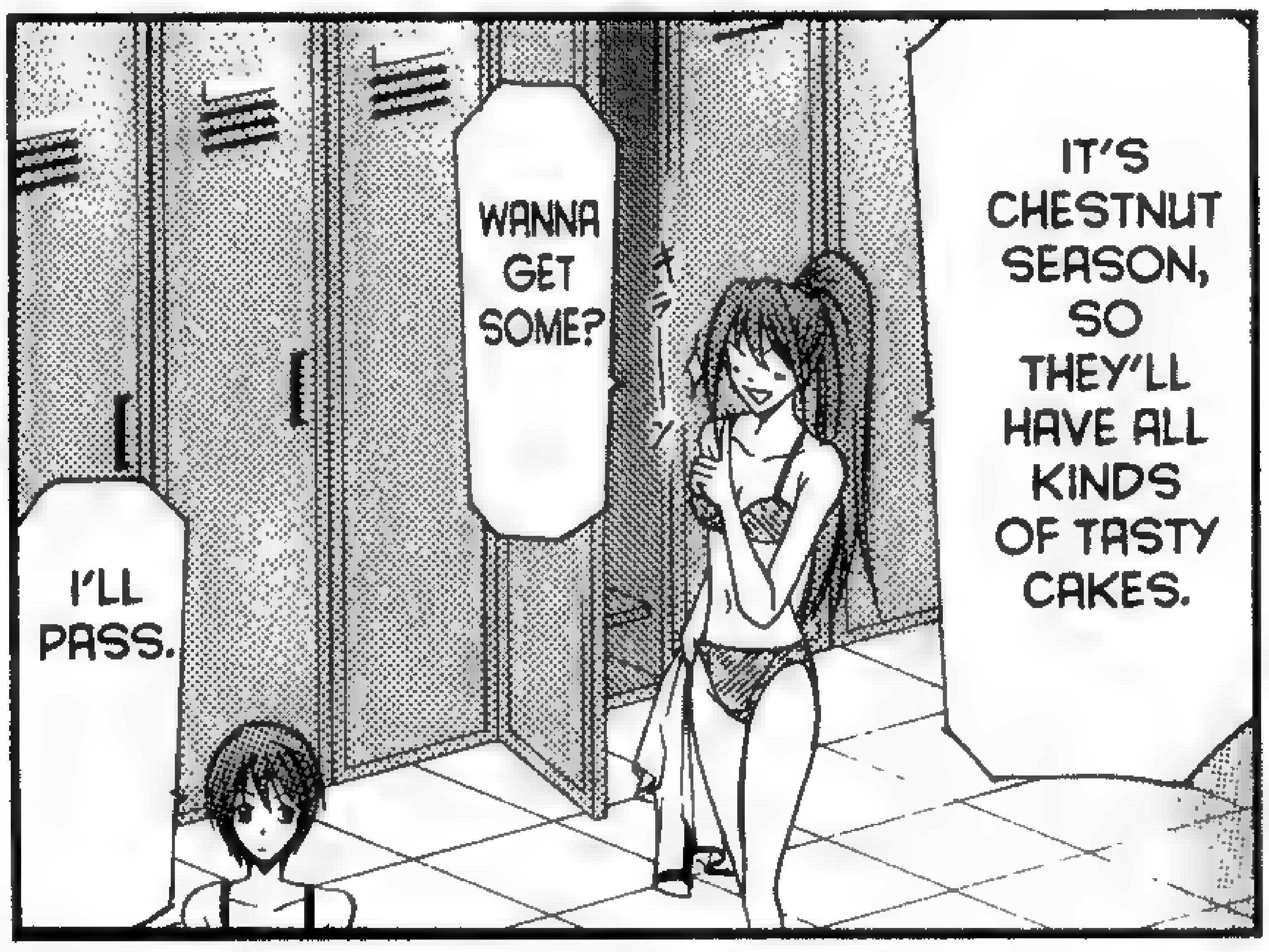
Pocari, page 70

Pocari Sweat is a popular sports drink similar to Gatorade.


HEY, SAKURAI-SAN, GET ME A POCARI.
CHATTER
CHATTER
HUH? I DON'T THINK SHE'S HERE TODAY.

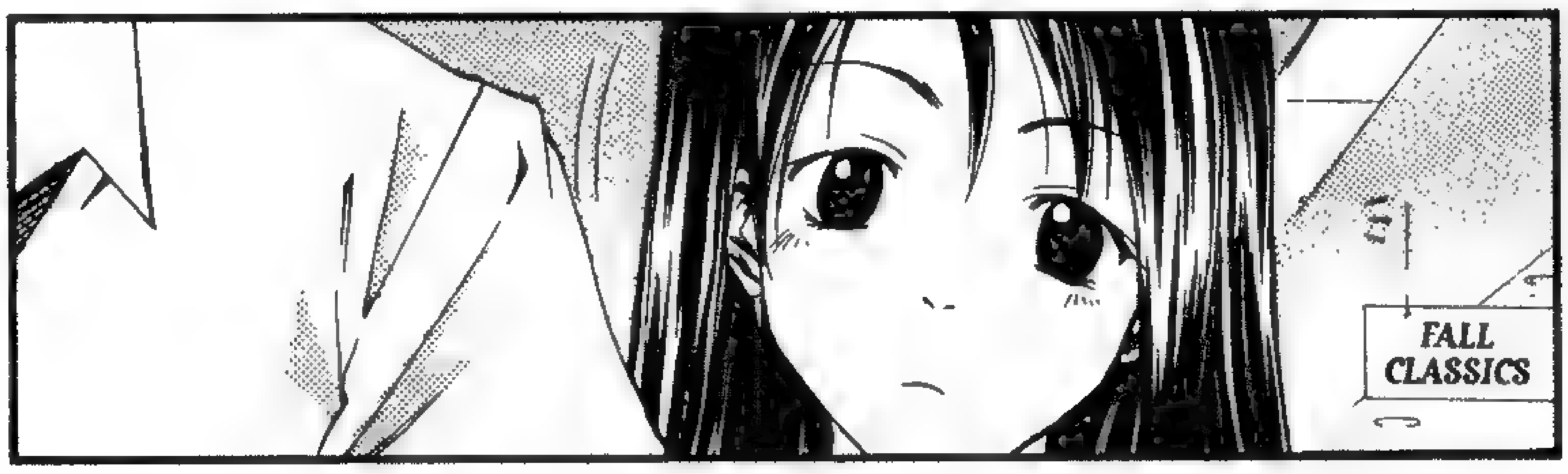
Chestnut season, page 90

Chestnuts are a common snack in Japan. In the fall and winter they're sold by street vendors. Chestnut sweets and cakes are very popular seasonal treats.


IT'S CHESTNUT SEASON, SO THEY'LL HAVE ALL KINDS OF TASTY CAKES.
WANNA GET SOME?
I'LL PASS.

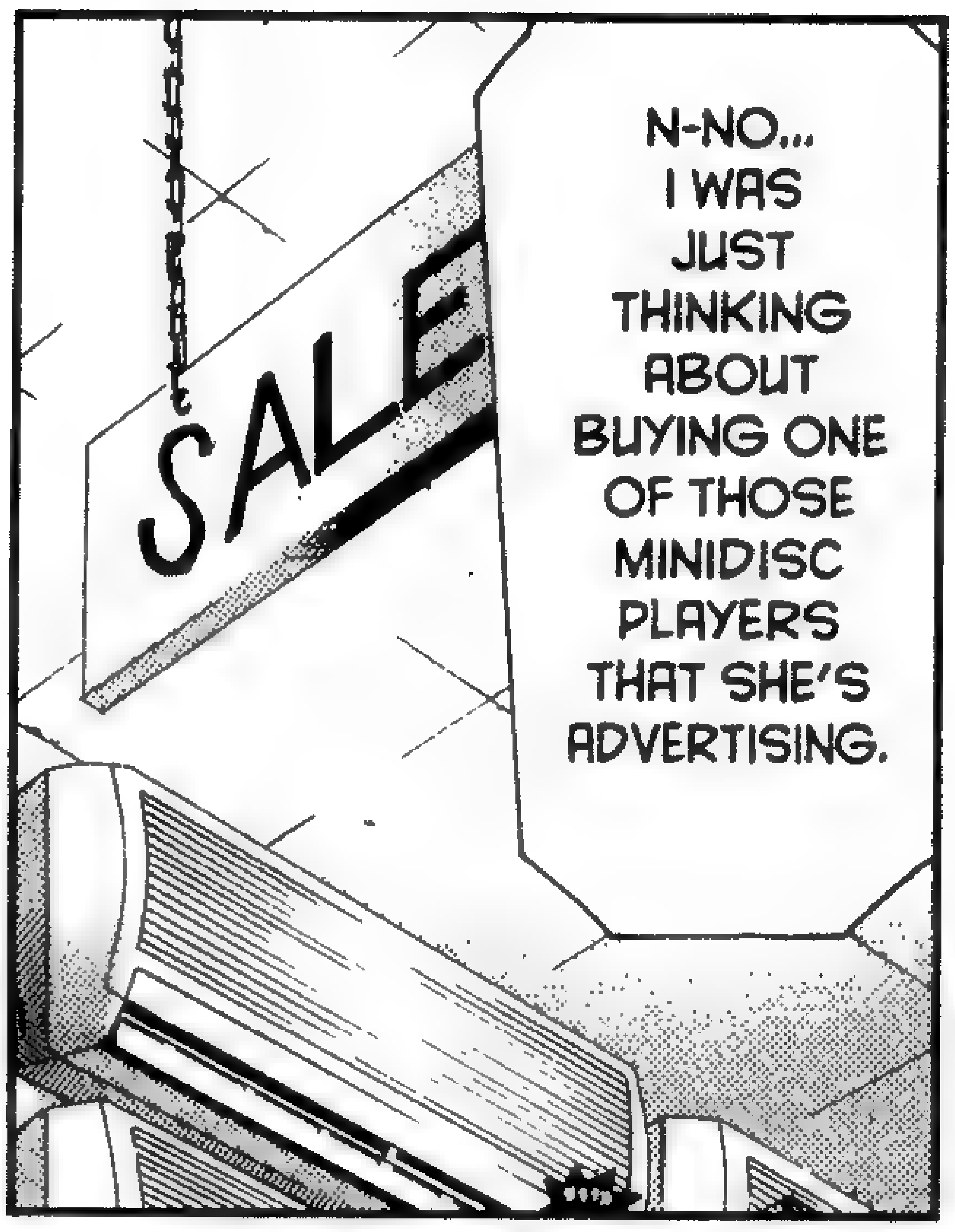
Fall reading, page 104

In Japan, fall is considered the best time of year to enjoy a novel. In bookstores, come autumn, there is often a special section of fall reading material.


FALL CLASSICS

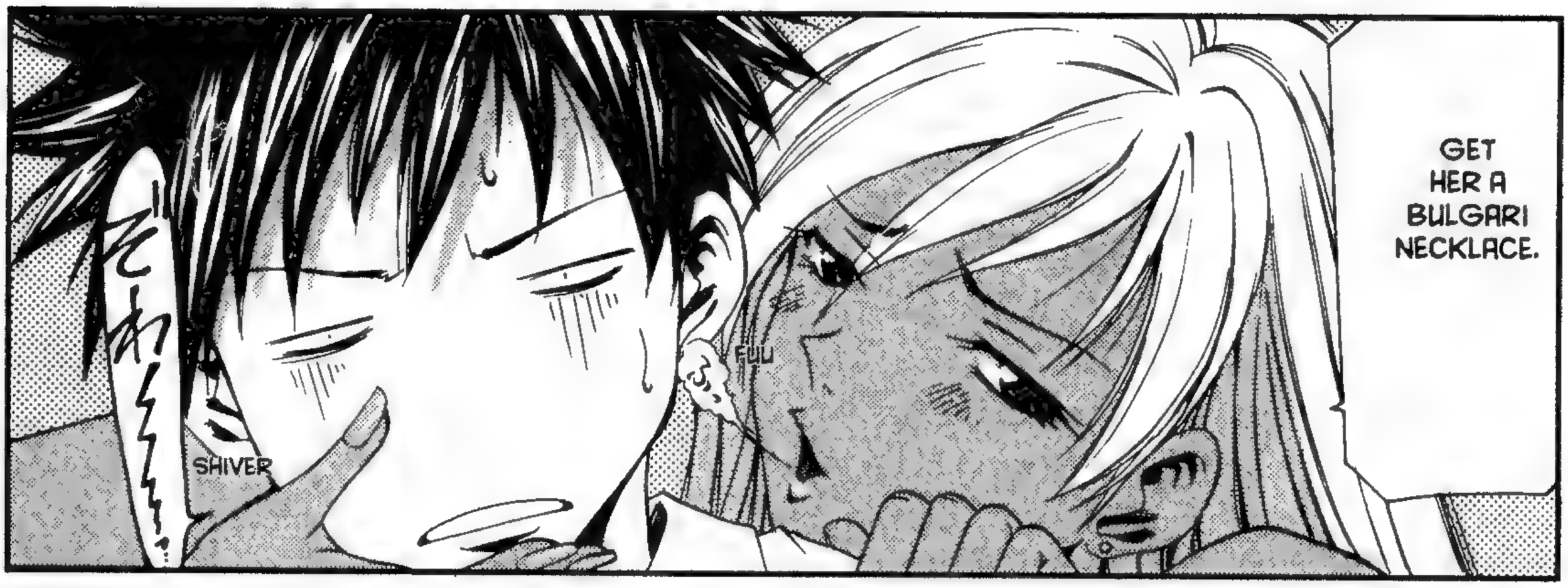
MD player, page 105

MiniDiscs are miniature CDs that can be used for recording. MD players are wildly popular in Japan, but the technology has never quite caught on in the States.


SALE
N-NO... I WAS JUST THINKING ABOUT BUYING ONE OF THOSE MINIDISC PLAYERS THAT SHE'S ADVERTISING.

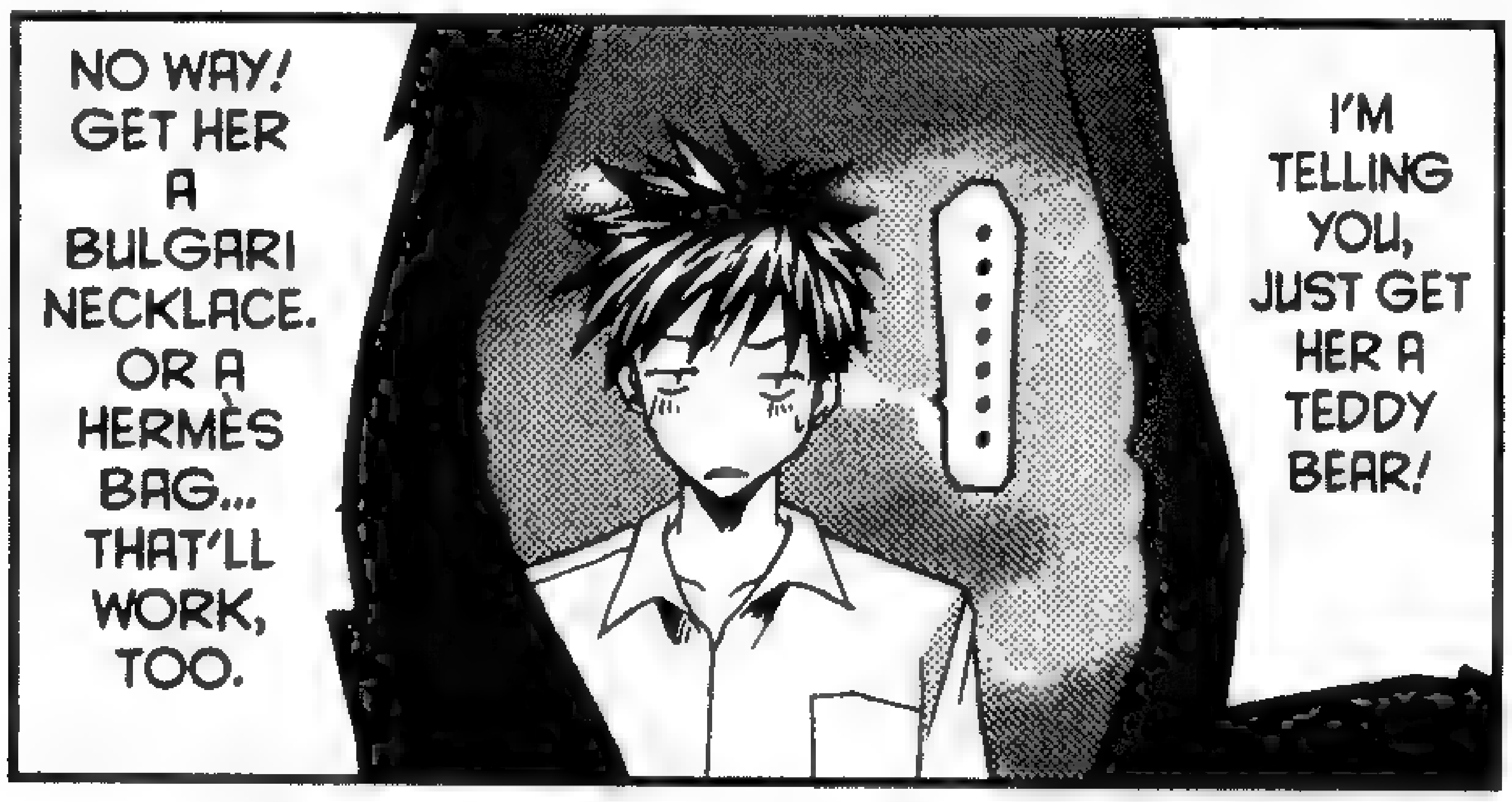
Bulgari, page 149

Bulgari is a high-end Italian fashion brand.


GET HER A BULGARI NECKLACE.
FUU
SHIVER

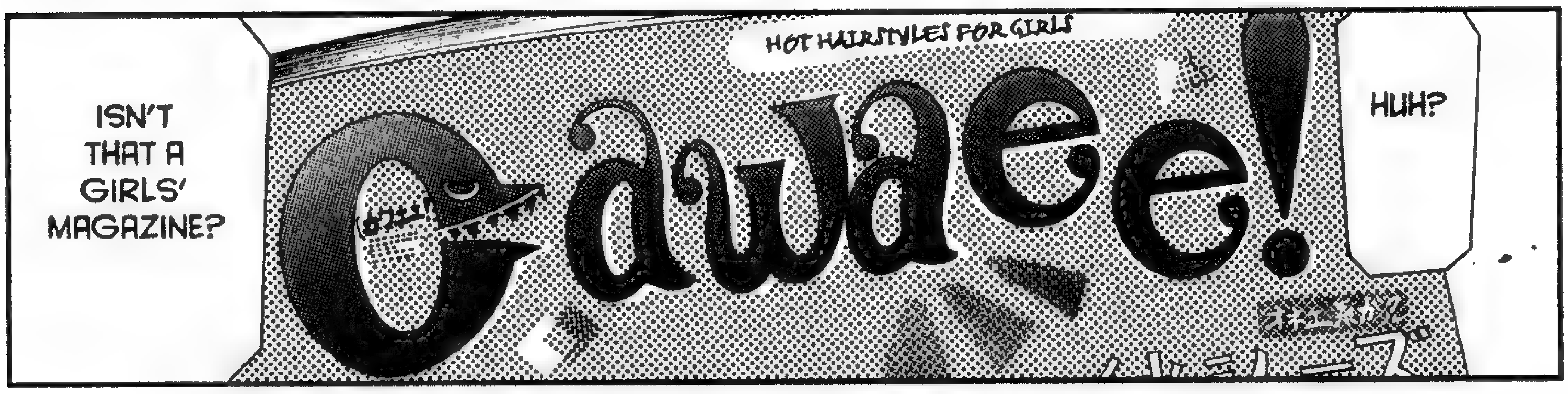
Hermès bag, page 150

The beautifully made leather bags from the French fashion house Hermès are among the most coveted luxury handbags. Grace Kelly and Jackie Onassis were two famous fans of Hermès bags. With a price tag running around five digits, a Hermès bag is way out of Yamato's price range.


I'M TELLING YOU, JUST GET HER A TEDDY BEAR!
....
NO WAY! GET HER A BULGARI NECKLACE. OR A HERMÈS BAG... THAT'LL WORK, TOO.

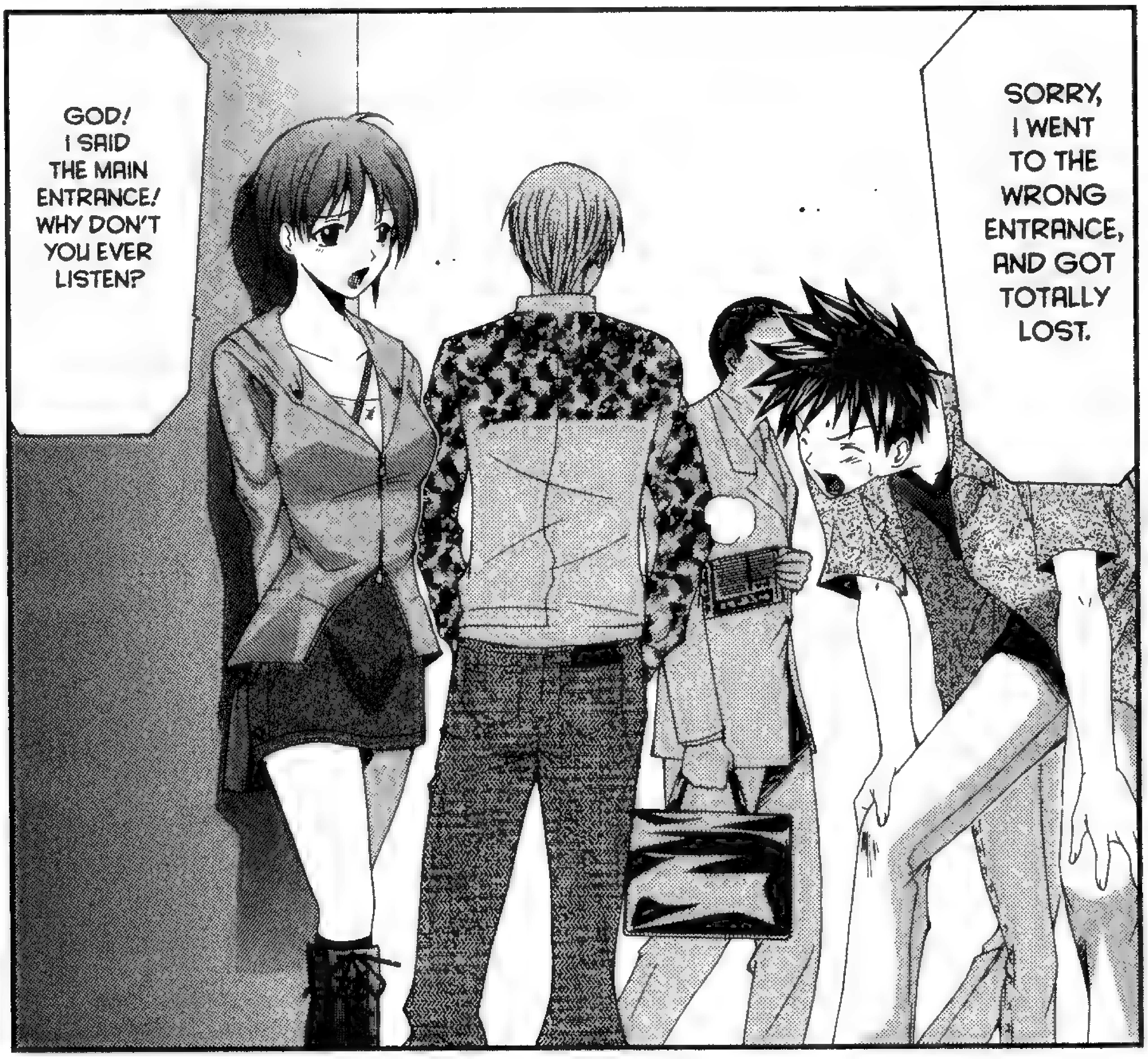
Cawaee magazine, page 154

This is a play on the popular girls' fashion magazine title *Cawaii*, which is itself a play on the Japanese word for "cute," *kawaii*.


ISN'T THAT A GIRLS' MAGAZINE?
HOT HAIRSTYLES FOR GIRLS
Cawaee!
HUH?

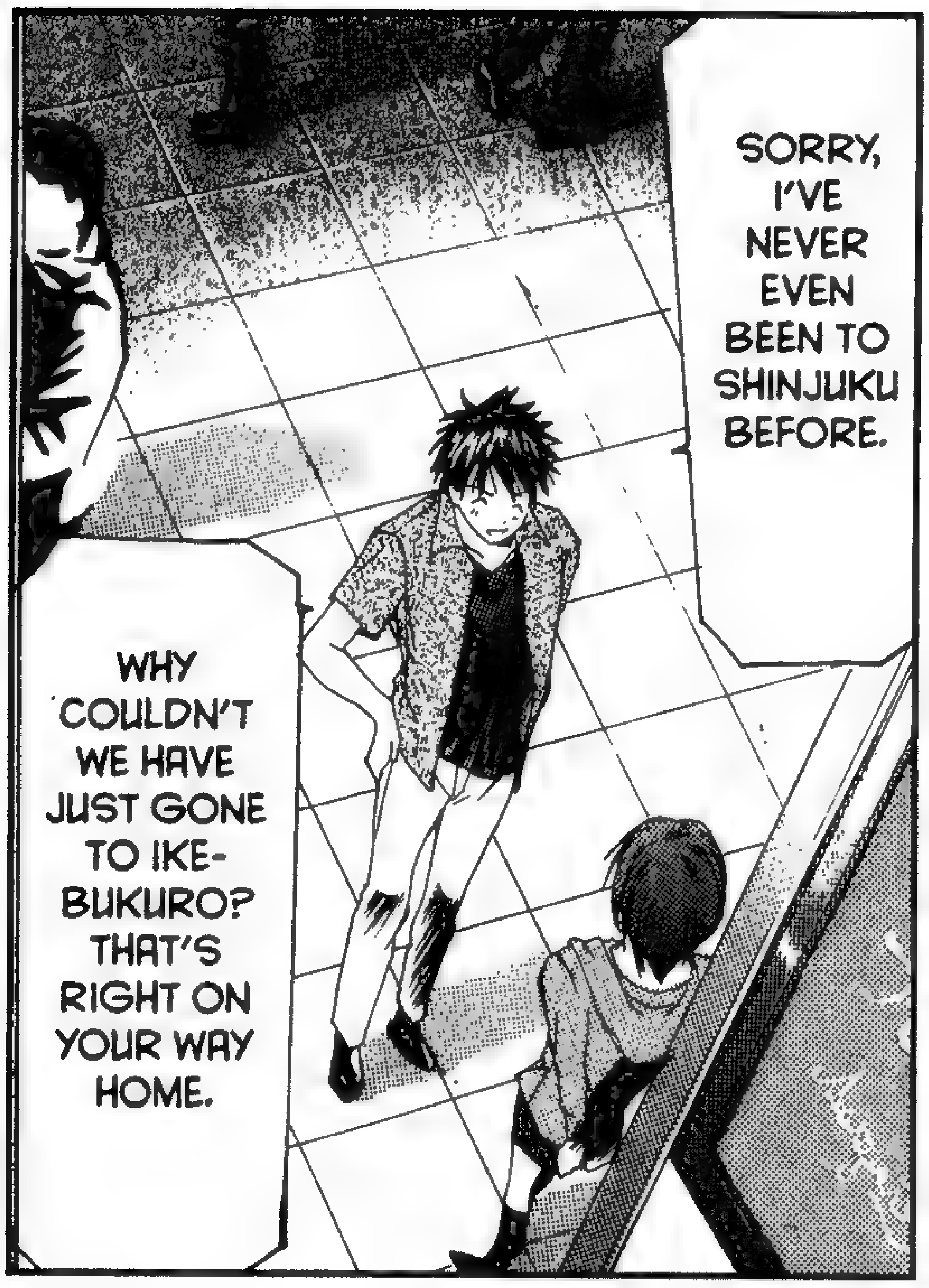
Lost in Shinjuku, page 160

Shinjuku Station is one of the largest central train stations in Tokyo. Around three million people pass through the station each day. It's a city within a city replete with restaurants, department stores, and underground shopping promenades. It's notoriously confusing to navigate one's way through the station.


GOD! I SAID THE MAIN ENTRANCE! WHY DON'T YOU EVER LISTEN?
SORRY, I WENT TO THE WRONG ENTRANCE, AND GOT TOTALLY LOST.

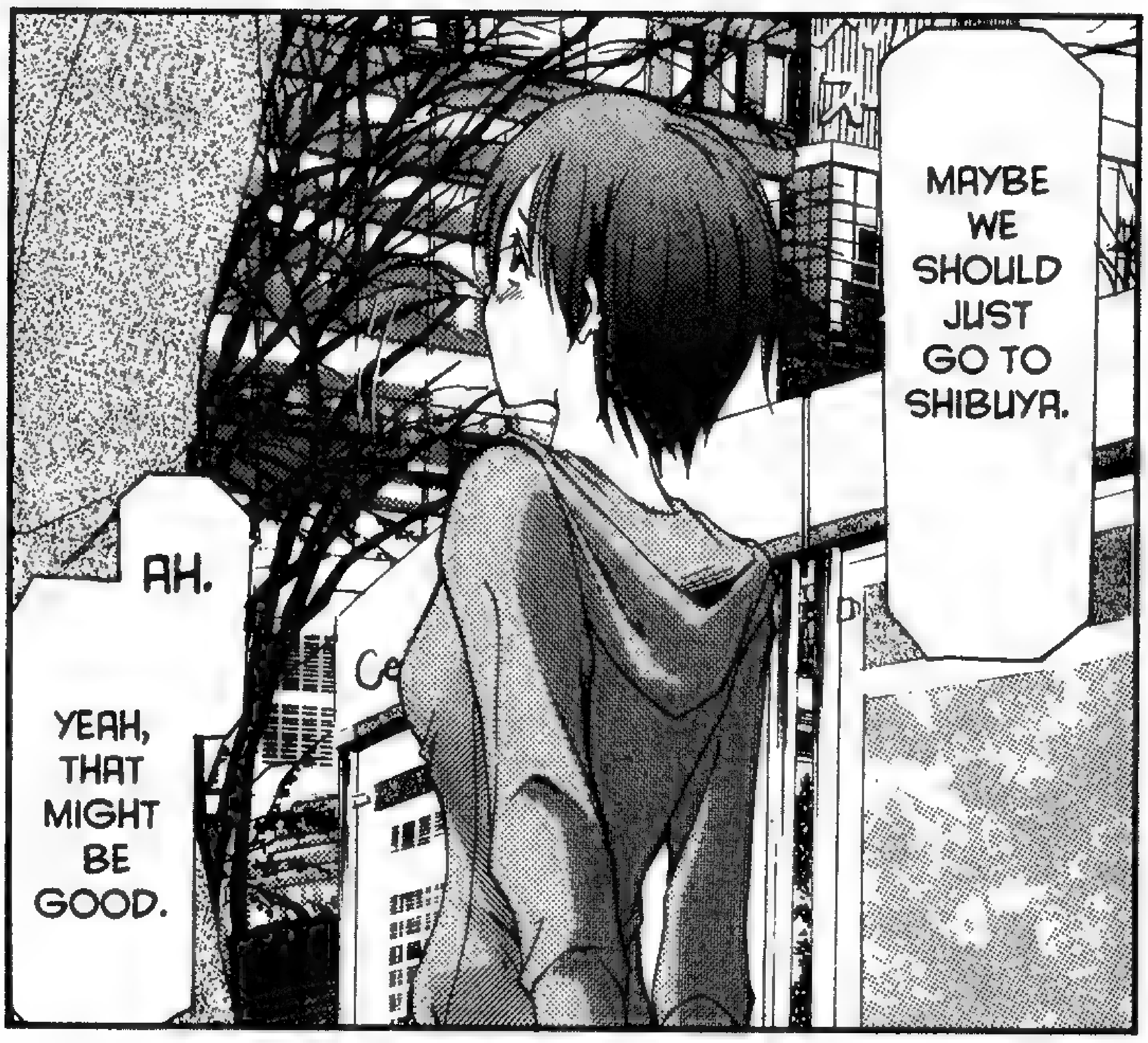
Ikebukuro, page 161

Ikebukuro is another central Tokyo shopping district famous for its huge department stores.


SORRY, I'VE NEVER EVEN BEEN TO SHINJUKU BEFORE.
WHY COULDN'T WE HAVE JUST GONE TO IKE-BUKURO? THAT'S RIGHT ON YOUR WAY HOME.

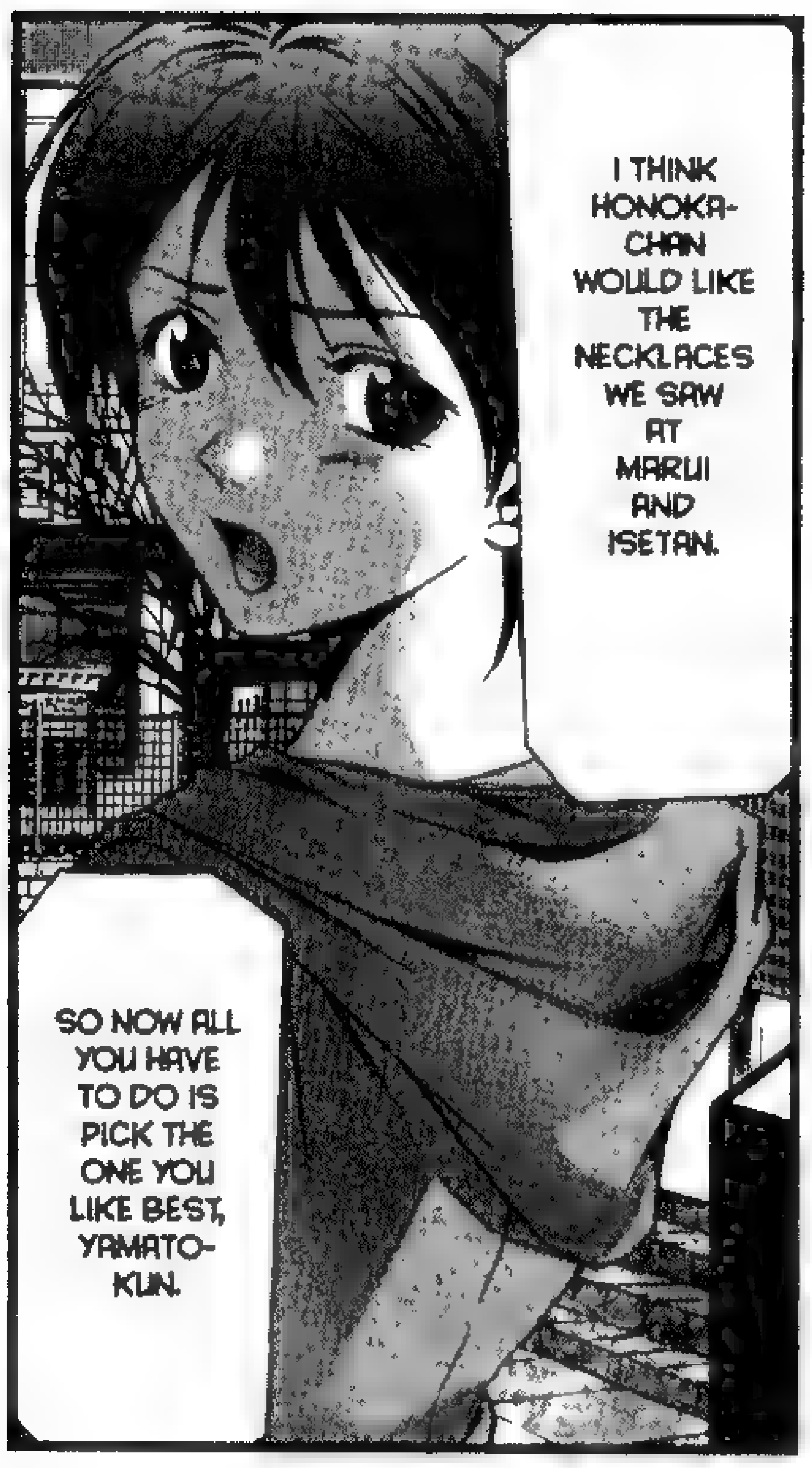
Shibuya, page 166

Shibuya is yet another famous Tokyo shopping district. It's very popular with young people.


MAYBE WE SHOULD JUST GO TO SHIBUYA.
AH.
YEAH, THAT MIGHT BE GOOD.

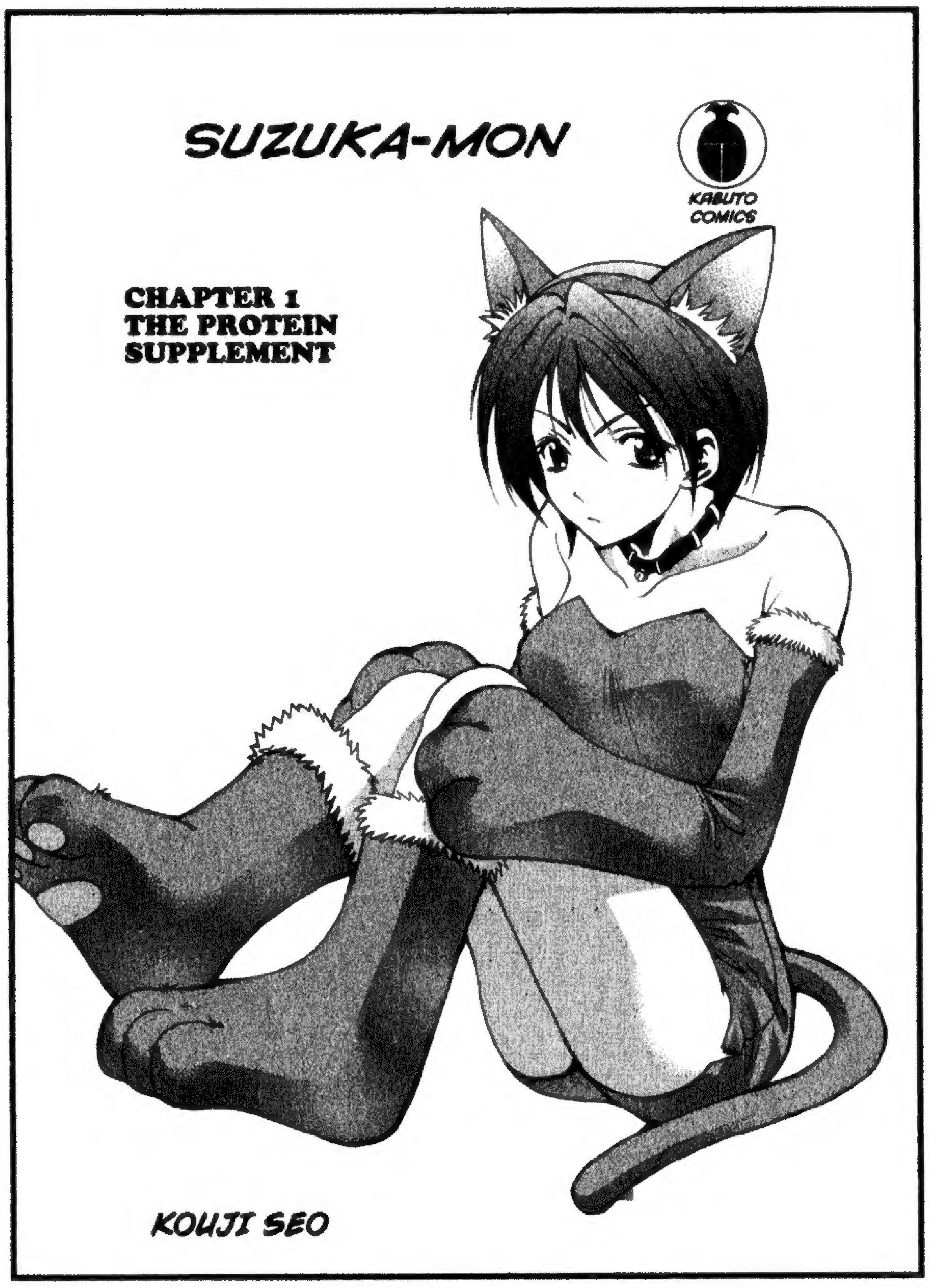
Marui and Isetan, page 167

Marui and Isetan are both department stores.


I THINK HONOKA-CHAN WOULD LIKE THE NECKLACES WE SAW AT MARUI AND ISETAN.
SO NOW ALL YOU HAVE TO DO IS PICK THE ONE YOU LIKE BEST, YAMATO-KUN.

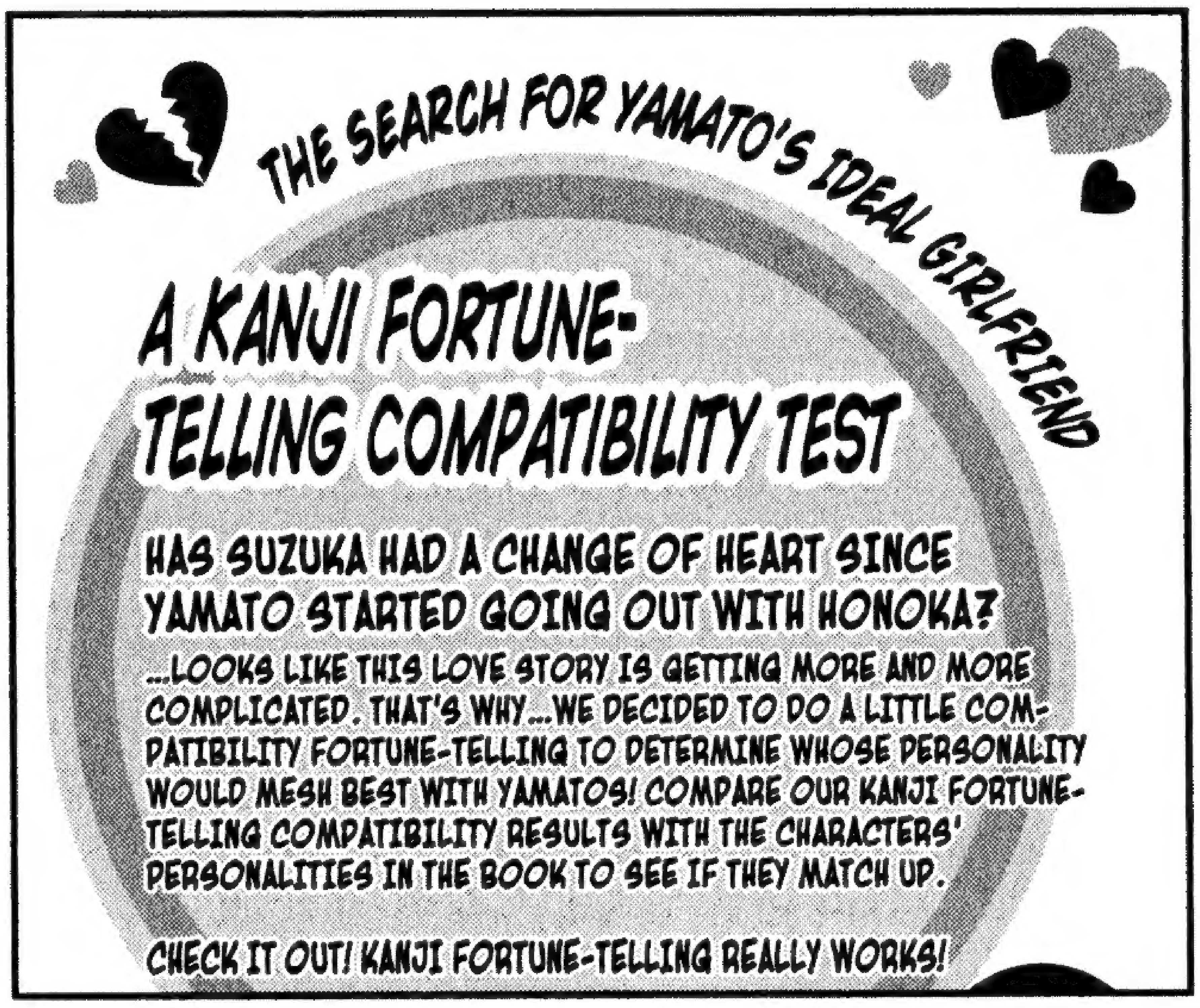
Suzuka-mon, page 177

This Suzuka-mon bonus comic is a parody of the famous Japanese cartoon character Doraemon. Doraemon is a catlike creature with a magical pocket containing an endless supply of useful gadgets.



Kanji fortune-telling, page 186

Aishou uranai is a method of fortune-telling where the kanji in a person's first and last name are used to determine their personality type. The fortune is determined by adding up the number of strokes in all the kanji characters in the name.



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